SUMMARY OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
Teleconference: 866-299-3188/9195415544#
April 15, 2015; 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. EDT

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB or Board) teleconference was held on April 15, 2015. The agenda for this meeting is provided as Attachment A, a list of the participants is provided as Attachment B, and action items from the teleconference are included as Attachment C. The official certification of the minutes by the Chair or Vice-Chair is included as Attachment D.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. ROLL CALL/INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Patty Carvajal, Chair of ELAB, and Ms. Lara Phelps, Designated Federal Official (DFO) of ELAB, welcomed participants to the teleconference and called an official roll of the Board members and guests.

2. OPENING REMARKS FROM DFO

Ms. Phelps reported that the EPA measurement website, of which ELAB will be a part when it is final, has entered its first review, which is a lengthy process. Following this review, Ms. Phelps will provide more information about the Drupal environment that will be the basis for the website. She recently received all of the paperwork to renew the Board's Charter and must submit it by May 8, 2015. The renewal, which occurs every 2 years, will be a routine process.

Ms. Michelle Wade asked about adding members to the Board given the recent loss in membership. Ms. Phelps said that this was the decision of the ELAB members, but she believes that the current 12 members can handle the workload, even if it means addressing only a few issues at a time. If she were to initiate the membership process, it would not occur before December 2015, and the new members would be out of sync with the rest of the membership. Another possibility would be to justify accelerating the next membership process so that new members could be added prior to October 2006, when the next Board term begins. There is nothing precluding ELAB from functioning properly with its current membership; ELAB was a 12-member Board until approximately 8 years ago. In response to a question from Dr. Dallas Wait, Ms. Phelps explained that her target number of members for the upcoming membership cycle will be 16 members.

Ms. Carvajal reiterated that it is possible to table topics so that the current membership is not overwhelmed. Ms. Phelps added that ELAB has not taken full advantage of a common Federal Advisory Committee tool, which is to invite outside experts to help vet a topic. Although the 12 Board members are the only ones authorized to make decisions about how topics will be addressed, external experts are welcome to participate in the information-gathering and draft-writing processes. Additionally, an official subcommittee can be formed around any topic; such a subcommittee would be authorized to issue a final report, but the Board still would be able to

provide its own comments and considerations. She encouraged the members to table topics as necessary and/or add outside volunteers to help explore issues rather than seeking new membership at this time.

Dr. Wait asked whether it was appropriate for someone from his company to attend Task Group conference calls to help the group address issues. Ms. Phelps said that this was acceptable.

3. APPROVAL OF MARCH MINUTES

Ms. Carvajal asked whether any members had comments regarding the March face-to-face meeting minutes in addition to those that Ms. Aurora Shields had sent via email; there were none. Dr. Henry Leibovitz moved to accept the minutes with the changes, and Dr. Wait seconded the motion. The Board approved the March minutes unanimously with the changes.

4. UPDATES ON CURRENT TOPICS

Method Update Rule (MUR)

Ms. Carvajal reported that the deadline to submit comments on the MUR was extended until May 20, 2015. The Board must determine how to incorporate comments from other entities with which ELAB is in agreement. Ms. Phelps previously had indicated that the ELAB members must review the external comments to ensure that they understand and agree with them. Ms. Shields asked about any comments from other entities that differed from ELAB's comments. Ms. Carvajal said that it was a possibility that the Board might disagree with a portion of another entity's comments even while agreeing with most of them, but the goal of using this approach is to reduce redundancy by supporting other comments instead of recreating them.

Dr. Leibovitz explained that he is assisting the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) in developing its MUR comments, and when they are complete, he will forward them to the ELAB members. APHL also is encouraging its members to submit individual comments. He was not sure that ELAB needed to support others' comments, even if they are in agreement. Ms. Shields thought that similar comments from many different sources carried more weight compared to simply supporting others' comments, and Dr. Leibovitz agreed. Dr. Kitty Kong said that decreasing the burden on EPA in reviewing similar comments is desirable, and the Board can place an emphasis on those comments it shares with other organizations. Ms. Silky Labie agreed that multiple groups expressing the same thoughts provide more weight. Although it increases the burden on those reviewing the comments, multiple expressions of the same thought sends a strong message about their importance. In response to a comment by Ms. Shields, Ms. Phelps said that any original solutions ELAB has should be articulated, but if the Board finds similar language that it agrees with, there is no problem in acknowledging that other organizations echo ELAB's thoughts.

The Board discussed the logistics of approving the comments by the due date, which falls on the same day as ELAB's next meeting. The Board members have the current version of the letter and comments that the Task Group developed, and the Task Group would like to receive input from

the ELAB members. Ms. Kong suggested that the Board set a deadline of May 13, 2015, to obtain input from the ELAB members about the letter and comments.

In terms of incorporating comments from other organizations, Mr. Michael Flournoy explained that the goal is to not simply repeat what other organizations already have said. The Task Group also has discussed attaching the comments from other organizations to ELAB's comments. Incorporating and supporting other organizations' comments is a powerful way to articulate to EPA that change is needed and ELAB supports this change. Ms. Phelps said that the Board also could articulate that although it is not providing additional language to that offered by other organizations, it could provide its own if the Agency is interested.

Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs)

In Dr. Mahesh Pujari's absence, there was no additional information on this topic.

Methods Harmonization

Dr. Wait explained that the Task Group was determining recommendations that could be made to the Agency as it updates its methods. The Task Group members are making progress on the various categories of methods that they are exploring for harmonization. Dr. Wait plans to send his comments on herbicide methods to the Task Group within the next week. Ms. Shields and Mr. Flournoy are continuing to work on their assignments. Given its size, the Task Group is prioritizing its work.

Interagency Data Quality Task Force (IDQTF)/Data Quality Objective (DQO) Process

Dr. Leibovitz plans for the Task Group to discuss with Dr. Jordan Adelson (U.S. Navy) of the IDQTF how laboratories can be involved earlier in the DQO and Quality Assurance Project Plan processes. Dr. Wait asked whether the Task Group was aware of the federal guidance on this issue. Dr. Leibovitz indicated that the group is aware of the guidance, which suggests laboratories be involved, but laboratories are not being included early enough in the process to provide their expertise in a meaningful way. This is an issue that the Task Group will discuss with the IDQTF. Ms. Phelps noted that Dr. Adelson has been out of the office and will be unavailable the week of April 27, 2015, but a meeting may be possible during the week of April 20 or the first week of May. She will initiate contact with Dr. Adelson so that the group can determine the best time to meet.

Qualification of Drinking Water Data

Ms. Carvajal reported that the Task Group has not met since the previous Board meeting. This issue has evolved into a much larger question, including how ELAB should address this with the Agency. Ms. Phelps recommended including EPA staff from various parts of the Office of Water (OW) to better frame the conversation with the Agency; she will be happy to facilitate the discussion with the appropriate staff. Ms. Carvajal will develop a synopsis of the issue so that Ms. Phelps can contact OW staff and facilitate the meeting. The goal will be to meet in early May.

In-Line and On-Line Monitoring

Mr. Flournoy explained that the Task Group will be meeting the following week. He is waiting for documentation from instrument vendors so that the group can examine their requirements and utilize vendor language or options to help formulate a plan to help EPA develop calibration for on-line and in-line monitors.

Acrolein and Acrylonitrile Methods

In Dr. Pujari's absence, there was no additional information on this topic.

5. NEW TOPICS/ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The Board discussed its plans to table any of its current topics. Because the IDQTF topic will not be time-consuming, Dr. Leibovitz did not think that it needed to be tabled. He thought that the Board needed to continue with the topic of qualification of drinking water data because of its timeliness and importance. Ms. Shields agreed, adding that the methods harmonization efforts can continue because a slow pace is acceptable for this topic. Mr. Mike Delaney agreed, noting that he would like the PCB effort to move forward because the Board could provide some meaningful input before the Agency proposes a new PCB method. Ms. Carvajal summarized that the Board members would like to keep the current tasks moving forward, even if they do so slowly.

Ms. Carvajal noted that the July face-to-face meeting is approaching quickly and will be held in Chicago, Illinois. The Board has the full afternoon to interact with its stakeholders and inform them of ELAB's efforts. It also provides a prime opportunity to obtain stakeholder input regarding Board topics. She will be developing the agenda and the PowerPoint presentation for the meeting, which will rely heavily on Task Group updates. Ms. Phelps added that the preliminary brochure for the conference will be mailed within the next few weeks, and the abstract information for presentations will be available online by early May. The telephone line and Adobe Connect will be available for the ELAB meeting. In June, Ms. Phelps will ask for volunteers to staff the information desk, which provides the opportunity to network with attendees and increase interest in the Board's activities.

Ms. Phelps reported that the next quarterly meeting of the Forum on Environmental Measurements (FEM) will be on April 29, 2015. The FEM currently is undertaking a significant effort, writing a report that it will present to EPA's Science Advisory Board on environmental measurement, monitoring, and technology and the future of this field. The goal is to explore what actions that the Agency can take in these areas during the next 5 to 10 years. She will share more details with ELAB when she is able to do so.

6. WRAP-UP/REVIEW ACTION ITEMS

Ms. LeBaron reviewed the action items identified during the meeting, which are included in Attachment C.

7. CLOSING REMARKS/ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Leibovitz moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Flournoy seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 2:11 p.m.

Attachment A

AGENDA
ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD
Monthly Teleconference: 866-299-3188/9195415544#
April 15, 2015; 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. (EDT)

Roll Call/Introduction of Guests	Carvajal/LeBaron
Opening Remarks From DFO	Phelps
Approval of March Minutes	Carvajal
Updates on Current Topics	All
Method Update Rule: Root	
Polychlorinated Biphenyls: Pujari	
Methods Harmony: Wait	
Interagency Data Quality Task Force/Data Quality Objectives Process: Leibovitz	
Qualification of Drinking Water Data: Carvajal	
In-Line and On-Line Monitoring: Flournoy	
Acrolein and Acrylonitrile Methods: Pujari	
New Topics/Issues for Consideration	
Wrap-Up/Review Action Items	Carvajal/LeBaron
Closing Remarks/Adjournment	Carvajal

Attachment B

MEMBERSHIP LISTING AND GUESTS

ELAB TELECONFERENCE
April 15, 2015; 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EDT

Attendance (Y/N)	Name	Affiliation
Y	Ms. Patricia (Patty) M. Carvajal (Chair)	San Antonio River Authority Representing: Watershed/Restoration
Y	Dr. A. Dallas Wait (Vice-Chair)	Gradient Corporation Representing: Consumer Products Industry
Y	Ms. Lara P. Phelps, DFO	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Representing: EPA
Y	Dr. Michael (Mike) Delaney	Massachusetts Water Resources Authority Representing: Massachusetts Water Resources Authority
Y	Mr. Michael Flournoy	Eurofins Environment Testing USA Representing: American Council of Independent Laboratories
N	Mr. Keith Greenaway	ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board Representing: The NELAC Institute
Y	Dr. Deyuan (Kitty) Kong	Chevron Energy Technology Company Representing: Chevron
Y	Ms. Sylvia (Silky) S. Labie	Environmental Laboratory Consulting & Technology, LLC Representing: Third-Party Assessors
Y	Dr. Henry Leibovitz	Rhode Island State Health Laboratories Representing: Association of Public Health Laboratories
N	Dr. Mahesh P. Pujari	City of Los Angeles Representing: National Association of Clean Water Agencies
N	Ms. Patsy Root	IDEXX Laboratories, Inc. Representing: Laboratory Product Developers
Y	Ms. Aurora Shields	City of Lawrence, Kansas Representing: Wastewater Laboratories
Y	Ms. Michelle L. Wade	Kansas Department of Health and the Environment Representing: Laboratory Accreditation Bodies

Attendance (Y/N)	Name	Affiliation
Y	Ms. Kristen LeBaron (Contractor)	The Scientific Consulting Group, Inc. (SCG)
Y	Ms. Susan Moore (Guest)	Hunton & Williams, LLP
Y	Mr. Phil Worby (Guest)	Accutest Laboratories

Attachment C

ACTION ITEMS

1. Ms. LeBaron will finalize the March meeting minutes and send them to Ms. Phelps via email.

2. Board members will provide comments on the MUR letter to Ms. Carvajal and Ms. Root no later than close of business on May 13, 2015.

3. Ms. Phelps will help Dr. Leibovitz connect with Dr. Adelson and determine the best time to meet.

4. Ms. Carvajal will develop a synopsis for Ms. Phelps, who will help the Qualification of Drinking Water Data Task Group connect with appropriate OW staff.

Attachment D

I hereby certify that this is the final version of the minutes for the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board Meeting held on April 15, 2015.

Signature Chair

Ms. Patty Carvajal

Print Name Chair