

Future of Laboratory Accreditation in California

Update to BACWA executive board

17 June 2016

NELAP, NELAC, TNI...

- ▶ ELAP: California Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program
- ▶ ELTAC: Environmental Laboratory Technical Advisory Committee
- ▶ NELAP: National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program
- ▶ NELAC: National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Council (NELAC)
- ▶ TNI: The NELAC Institute
- ▶ AB: Accreditation Body
- ▶ SLAG: Small Lab Advisory Group
- ▶ TNI 2003 standards and TNI 2009 standards (ISO 17025)
 - 4 volumes of standards
 - 2003 standard available online but 2009 standard because of ISO language, copyrighted
 - Volume 1: Management and Technical Requirements for Laboratories Performing Environmental Analysis
 - Single user version \$130.00
 - Network version \$300.00
- ▶ The TNI standard guidance for small labs (\$190); no copyright restrictions

ELAP in the beginning...

- ▶ Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Act, 1988
- ▶ Fully fee funded
- ▶ Necessary for primacy
- ▶ Sometime in 2000s, becomes NELAP Accreditation Body, i.e., TNI Standards.
- ▶ Not being able to meet NELAP standards, as of 31 January 2014, Ca ELAP withdrew from the program

ELAP goes to Sacramento

- ▶ Under California Department of Public Health, main office in Richmond
- ▶ July 1, 2014 transitioned to State Water Resources Control Board, DDW
 - Deputy Director – Program Management Branch – ELAP
- ▶ Moved offices to Sacramento
- ▶ Program evaluation starts

Expert Review Panel (ERP)

- ▶ ELAP seeking external, independent advice
- ▶ SCCWRP – has the contract to organize the ERP
- ▶ Final report – Oct 22, 2015
- ▶ Recommendation with most impact to utility laboratories: “The State should adopt an existing, external set of accreditation standards...”.

ELAP makes the next move

- ▶ ELAP explores fee structure:
 - By FOT
 - Base fee only
 - Number of samples analyzed
- ▶ Fee increased – December 1, 2015
- ▶ 57.84% increase for base fee and 57.84% increase for FOT
- ▶ Decides
 - Drinking water laboratories require site audits
 - Wastewater can be certified on meeting requirements such as passing PT, paying the fee, etc.

ELTAC

- ▶ Existing committee disbanded
- ▶ New by-laws approved on February 4, 2016
- ▶ 35 people volunteer for ELTAC
- ▶ New set of members (18) appointed
- ▶ State agencies have large representation under the new structure (5)
- ▶ Criteria for selection: lab size, CWEA, CASA, ACIL, north/south California, Commercial or utility

ELTAC members

- ▶ **Mindy Boele**, City of Vacaville, Representative Member (representing CWEA)
- ▶ **Jill Brodt**, Brelje and Race Laboratories, Representative Member (representing small Northern California commercial laboratories)
- ▶ **Stephen Clark**, Pacific EcoRisk, Representative Member (representing specialty laboratories)
- ▶ **Ronald Coss**, Orange County Sanitation District, Representative Member (Representing CWEA)
- ▶ **Huy Do**, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, Representative Member (representing CASA)
- ▶ **Andy Eaton**, Eurofins Eaton Analytical, Representative Member (representing large, multistate commercial laboratories)
- ▶ **Miriam Ghabour**, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Representative Member (representing large, municipal laboratories)
- ▶ **Bruce Godfrey**, Montrose Environmental Group, Representative Member (representing ACIL)
- ▶ **Rich Gossett**, Physis Environmental, Representative Member (representing commercial and academic sectors)
- ▶ **Dave Kimbrough**, Pasadena Water and Power, Representative Member (representing small, Southern California municipal laboratories)
- ▶ **Mark Koekemoer**, Napa Sanitation District Laboratory, Representative Member (representing small, Northern California municipal laboratories)
- ▶ **Allison Mackenzie**, Babcock Laboratories, Representative Member (representing medium/large California commercial laboratories)
- ▶ **Gilda Neshvad**, Positive Lab Service, Representative Member (representing Hazardous Waste laboratories)
- ▶ **Renee Spears**, State Water Resources Control Board, State Regulatory Agency Employee
- ▶ **Bruce Burton**, Division of Drinking Water, State Water Resources Control Board, State Regulatory Agency Employee
- ▶ **Gail Cho**, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, State Regulatory Agency Employee
- ▶ **Anthony Gonzalez**, Sacramento County Public Health Laboratory, Representative Member (representing CAPHLD)
- ▶ **Bruce LaBelle**, California Department of Toxic Substances Control, State Regulatory Agency Employee

Some concerns

- ▶ ELAP will adopt TNI standards:
 - Paperwork intensive
 - Standards are hard to follow
 - Expensive – higher fees, PT twice per year
 - Being unable to meet the standard, the lab may go out of business
- ▶ No decision yet
- ▶ ELTAC is active

What's so good about TNI standards?

- ▶ Defines 'laboratory'
- ▶ Code of conduct for auditors
- ▶ Clear deadlines for accreditation body (AB) performance
- ▶ Process for arbitrating method related questions as well as AB
- ▶ Laboratory can hire an accredited third party for audit

BACWA lab committee

- ▶ Continuously following the development
- ▶ Distributed information as it became available
- ▶ ELTAC member Mindy Boele attends meetings, provides updates and takes input
- ▶ Conducted workshop on May 18 to discuss TNI standards



Summary

- ▶ ELAP needed to improve
- ▶ TNI standards could be challenging but also helpful
- ▶ Be clear about what you want from ELAP
- ▶ Be cognizant of the price you will pay for what you ask
- ▶ Work with ELTAC members
- ▶ No decisions yet from ELAP for the type of standard they intend to adopt
- ▶ ELAP fees will increase

Resources:

- ▶ TNI website: www.nelac-institute.org
- ▶ Consultants:
 - Quality Assurance Solutions LLC
 - William Ray Consulting, LLC
 - <http://www.nelac-institute.org/content/eds-home.php>