

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

**SUMMARY OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**

Teleconference: 866-299-3188/9195415544#

April 16, 2014; 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 16, 2014. 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. OPENING REMARKS

Ms. Patsy Root, 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. Ms. Root thanked Ms. Michelle Wade for chairing the March meeting in her absence. Ms. Phelps announced that the *Federal Register* notice regarding ELAB membership was released at the beginning of the prior week. The deadline is Friday, April 18, 2014, but because the *Federal Register* notice was delayed, Ms. Phelps can extend the deadline to Friday, April 25, 2014.

2. APPROVAL OF MARCH MINUTES

Ms. Root asked whether any members had comments regarding the March minutes. Mr. Dave Speis requested that "for small laboratories" be added to the end of the following sentence on page 2: "When Clean Water Act monitoring began, the use of GC caused a financial disadvantage." Dr. Mahesh Pujari asked to add "acrolein" to the sentence on page 2 regarding his question to Mr. Hanley about Method 624. On page 4, the terms "congeners" and "aroclor" should be reversed. Mr. John Phillips requested that the instance of "ALS Limited" on page 4 be changed to refer to the more-specific component of the company, "ALS Environmental." Mr. Speis moved to accept the minutes with the editorial changes, and Dr. Pujari seconded the motion. The Board approved the March minutes unanimously with the editorial changes suggested by the members; there were two abstentions.

3. UPDATES ON CURRENT TOPICS

Ms. Root will contact Ms. Wade to determine the outcome of her conversation with Mr. Lem Walker (EPA) regarding the Method Update Rule (MUR). Ms. Phelps said that the Forum on Environmental Measurements (FEM) had not discussed the issue further. The next quarterly meeting of the FEM is April 30, 2014, and Ms. Phelps can follow up if the Board would like. Ms. Root said that she would like to determine whether the FEM has any additional input regarding how ELAB could be further involved with the MUR. Ms. Phelps explained that this was the purview of the Office of Water (OW) rather than the FEM.

Dr. Pujari said that his concerns about acrylonitrile and acrolein needed to be included in the letter to EPA, and he would discuss them with Dr. Richard Burrows. Mr. Speis said that the recommendations that Dr. Burrows had sent to the Board for review were acceptable as written, and he would not edit them. Dr. Pujari said that he needed to speak with Dr. Burrows about some additional recommendations. He will send the updated recommendations to the Board when they are complete. Dr. Michael Wichman said that Mr. Walker has specifically stated that the 8000 series will not be approved for wastewater methods; laboratories will be required to produce supporting information confirming that they are able to meet the method detection limits (MDLs) stated in permits. Dr. Pujari would like Mr. Walker to add compounds to Method 624 so that analysis will be easier. Ms. Root suggested that Dr. Pujari provide his suggestions and supporting materials to Dr. Burrows so that the two can work together to draft the recommendations. Once Dr. Pujari has added his comments, the Board can review the recommendations from scientific and editorial standpoints. Dr. Pujari noted the revisions to Method 624 and the new compounds listed in Method 8260 and thought that Mr. Walker agreed with his concerns. Dr. Wichman reiterated that—although laboratories use the 500, 600 and 8000 series, which are very similar—Mr. Walker has stated that 8000 method series is not approved for wastewater methods. Ms. Root also was unsure that Mr. Walker would be receptive to a suggestion to change the target of a method. Dr. Pujari volunteered to contact Mr. Walker to discuss this.

Mr. Speis commented that most laboratories performing this analysis have been required to comply with permits that list compounds that go beyond Method 624, and as long as the MDLs are developed and included in the standard operating procedures, this approach has not been questioned. ELAB's suggestion could be that additional volatile compounds can be included if the laboratory develops appropriate MDLs and proves that they can be monitored with reasonable precision and accuracy; this is preferable to listing individual compounds. Ms. Root agreed with this suggestion. Dr. Pujari volunteered to contact Mr. Walker to determine his receptivity. Dr. Wichman agreed with Mr. Speis' suggestion, which would make contacting Mr. Walker unnecessary. Ms. Root agreed that it was unnecessary to contact Mr. Walker at this time.

Mr. Jack Farrell did not think that Dr. Pujari's suggestion is a viable option for the current MUR based on Mr. Walker's prior comments. If the suggestion is put forward in a future MUR, there must be a mechanism for validation. Ms. Root asked Dr. Pujari to add his recommendations to those that Dr. Burrows had developed so that the Board could review them. She could contact Mr. Walker via telephone to determine whether he might be receptive to Dr. Pujari's suggestion.

Ms. Root asked whether the members would like to hear a presentation regarding nanotechnology or nanomaterials during a future Board meeting. Mr. Speis responded that the topic is too nebulous currently, so ELAB members had discussed during the previous month's meeting that the Board would follow the topic as it develops but would not actively pursue any efforts at this time. Dr. Dallas Wait commented that there is a lack of knowledge about methodologies associated with nanomaterials. He recommended a paper that he had discovered that discusses the analytical aspects of nanomaterials: Farré M, Sanchís J, and Barceló D. 2011. Analysis and Assessment of the Occurrence, the Fate, and the Behavior of Nanomaterials in the Environment. *Trends in Analytical Chemistry* 30(3):517–527. Additionally, Ms. Phelps is reaching out to the nanoparticle community within EPA and determining the general status of efforts; she can share information as it becomes available. Ms. Root noted that the topic of

endocrine disrupting compounds is more prevalent than nanomaterials at the meetings she has attended during the past year or so.

Dr. Pujari commented that, in terms of work for the Task Group devoted to examining alternative, more sensitive methods for polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) analysis, Method 608 is old and outdated. He thought that the Board should work with this method first and asked about keeping aroclor in the method. Ms. Root reminded Dr. Pujari that ELAB already had sent revisions regarding Method 608 to Mr. Walker. Dr. Pujari requested feedback about whether the Agency should move from aroclors to congeners. Mr. Phillips did not think that the Board could make the determination about whether the Agency would use congeners or aroclors, but ELAB could provide a congener analysis with a means of calculating the aroclors from the congeners. Dr. Pujari did not think such a calculation was possible because congeners always will be present. Mr. Phillips said that there are well-defined percentages of congeners in various aroclors, so it is possible to extrapolate aroclor concentrations, as researchers have demonstrated. Mr. Farrell said that the question is whether it is aroclors or congeners that are regulated for wastewater, and he believes that it is aroclors. Dr. Pujari said that, recently, congeners have been included in permits in California in addition to aroclors. Mr. Phillips personally has not seen this. Ms. Root asked which method California had approved to determine congeners, as they now are included in permitting. Dr. Pujari said that laboratories had used Method 8280 to meet the permitting requirements. In response to a question from Mr. Speis, Dr. Pujari explained that the permits list the methods. Ms. Root did not think that EPA would be receptive to a suggestion to additionally monitor congeners in Method 608, especially since the Board already provided a very detailed suggested revision of Method 608 to the Agency. Ms. Root said that the Task Group could discuss potential methods to add congeners or find supporting data about how they can be assessed with a different method. Because the Board has not been specifically asked about this and already has provided detailed suggestions regarding Method 608, this effort would not be high priority.

Dr. Wait said that the Methods Harmony Task Group had met the week prior and discussed its approach. The Task Group would like to ensure that there is buy-in from EPA before initiating a substantive effort. Thus far, the group has five suggestions for improving methods harmonization within the Agency. Also, the Board can offer to provide additional assistance to the Agency on this issue if EPA is receptive. The goal is for Dr. Wait to draft a letter by the May ELAB meeting for Board discussion. Ms. Root asked about the audience for the letter. Dr. Wait responded that the audience originally was intended to be those EPA staff members who attended the Task Group teleconference in January, which included staff from OW and the Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery, but the audience could be broadened to other groups within EPA. Ms. Root thought that the FEM should be included so that as many different groups in the Agency as possible can begin to harmonize their methods and quality assurance/quality control. Dr. Wait read the list of EPA attendees from the January meeting, noting that he is willing to address the letter to any Agency personnel whom Ms. Phelps recommends. Ms. Phelps thought that those at the meeting would be the appropriate audience, as they will share it more broadly to their colleagues. She volunteered to introduce the topic to the FEM, and Dr. Michael Shapiro (EPA) could confirm that the staff members who attended the January teleconference are the appropriate audience.

Ms. Root asked whether field sampling was a topic for the Board to address. Other than complimenting EPA on its recent policies regarding competency, Ms. Phelps was unsure what

recommendations the Board could provide to the Agency at this point. If ELAB members have suggestions beyond the two policies that EPA recently has enacted, they can include them in a note of support about the Agency's current field sampling efforts. Mr. Farrell commented that he would like to see promotion of the use of The NELAC Institute (TNI) Field Sampling and Measurement Organization (FSMO) standards, which are being used by third-party accreditors. This augments the Agency's efforts by providing a quality system requirement and the opportunity for accreditation. Ms. Root wondered to what extent EPA's policies were similar to the TNI FSMO standards. Mr. Farrell said that the TNI FSMO standards are based on 17025 and establish a quality system and competency requirements. There also is an option for TNI FSMO organizations to become accredited by a third-party accreditor. He said that if Board members see a benefit to recommending the TNI FSMO standards, this can be added to the letter of support. Ms. Root said that accrediting to the standards will protect a laboratory from litigation better than following a policy. Mr. Farrell added that the TNI FSMO helps to standardize the process and will include the weight of American National Standards Institute behind it. Ms. Root supported the idea of sending a letter of support to the Agency regarding its field sampling protocols, suggesting that if the Agency needs guidance, it can refer to the TNI FSMO as an appropriate method to demonstrate compliance to the policies. Mr. Farrell said that he would provide information to the Board about the TNI FSMO standards by the May meeting.

In Ms. Silky Labie's absence, there was no update regarding the Interagency Data Quality Task Force/data quality objectives task.

4. NEW TOPICS/ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The Board did not introduce any new topics or issues for consideration.

5. WRAP-UP/REVIEW ACTION ITEMS

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

6. CLOSING REMARKS/ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Farrell moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Phillips seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 2:07 p.m.

Attachment A

AGENDA
ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD

Monthly Teleconference: 866-299-3188/9195415544#

April 16, 2014; 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. (EDT)

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|---|--------------|
| Opening Remarks | Phelps/Root |
| Approval of March Minutes | Root |
| Updates on Current Topics | All |
| Method Update Rule | |
| Discussion of EPA Presentation by Mr. Adrian Hanley | |
| Polychlorinated Biphenyls | |
| Methods Harmony | |
| Field Sampling | |
| Interagency Data Quality Task Force/Data Quality Objectives Process | |
| New Topics/Issues for Consideration | Wade |
| Wrap-Up/Review Action Items | Wade/LeBaron |
| Closing Remarks/Adjourn | Phelps/Wade |

Attachment B**MEMBERSHIP LISTING AND GUESTS****ELAB TELECONFERENCE****April 16, 2014; 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EDT**

| Attendance (Y/N) | Name | Affiliation |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Y | Ms. Patsy Root (Chair) | IDEXX Laboratories, Inc. Representing: Laboratory Product Developers |
| N | Ms. Michelle L. Wade (Vice-Chair) | Kansas Department of Health and the Environment Representing: Laboratory Accreditation Bodies |
| Y | Ms. Lara P. Phelps, DFO | U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Representing: EPA |
| N | Dr. Richard Burrows | TestAmerica Laboratories, Inc. Representing: Commercial Laboratory Industry |
| Y | Ms. Patricia M. Carvajal | San Antonio River Authority Representing: Watershed/Restoration |
| Y | Mr. John (Jack) E. Farrell, III | Analytical Excellence, Inc. Representing: The NELAC Institute (TNI) |
| Y | Ms. Ruth L. Forman | Environmental Standards, Inc. Representing: Large Third-Party Assessors |
| N | Ms. Sylvia (Silky) S. Labie | Environmental Laboratory Consulting & Technology, LLC Representing: Third-Party Assessors |
| Y | Ms. Susan L. Mazur | Florida Power and Light Representing: Utility Water Act Group |
| Y | Mr. John H. Phillips | Ford Motor Company Representing: Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers |
| Y | Dr. Mahesh P. Pujari | City of Los Angeles Representing: National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) |
| N | Dr. James N. Seiber | University of California, Davis Representing: Academic and Research Communities |
| N | Ms. Aurora Shields | City of Lawrence, Kansas Representing: Wastewater Laboratories |
| Y | Mr. David (Dave) N. Speis | QC Laboratories Representing: American Council of Independent Laboratories (ACIL) |
| Y | Dr. A. Dallas Wait | Gradient Representing: Consumer Products Industry |
| Y | Dr. Michael D. Wichman | State Hygienic Laboratory at the University of Iowa Representing: Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) |

| Attendance (Y/N) | Name | Affiliation |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| Y | Ms. Kristen LeBaron (Contractor) | The Scientific Consulting Group, Inc. (SCG) |
| Y | Dr. Mike Delaney (Guest) | Massachusetts Water Resources Authority |
| Y | Mr. Phil Worby (Guest) | Accutest Laboratories |

Attachment C

ACTION ITEMS

1. Ms. LeBaron will finalize the March 2014 meeting minutes and send them to Ms. Phelps via email.
2. Ms. Root will follow up with Ms. Wade about her MUR discussion with Mr. Walker.
3. Dr. Pujari will work with Dr. Burrows to add his recommendations on the acrolein/acrylonitrile issue to those that Dr. Burrows already provided to ELAB.
4. Dr. Pujari will convene the PCB Task Group via teleconference.
5. Mr. Farrell will provide information to the Board about the TNI FSMO Standards by the next Board meeting.

Attachment D

I hereby certify that this is the final version of the minutes for the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board Meeting held on April 16, 2014.

Michelle L. Wade

Signature Vice Chair

Ms. Michelle Wade

Print Name Vice Chair