

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

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

Teleconference: 866-299-3188/9195415544#

July 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 July 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 of ELAB, welcomed participants to the teleconference and called an official roll of the Board members and guests. Ms. Phelps said that the Forum on Laboratory Accreditation has a record number of registered attendees, and new ideas will be implemented at the meeting, including a technology showcase. EPA's Administrator is slated to attend as well. ELAB's website visibility will be enhanced following the EPA website upgrades being implemented. The Board's membership package has cleared the Office of General Counsel and is waiting for Administrator approval. Finally, EPA programs are working diligently to comply with the field testing memorandum released on March 1, 2013, which will increase consistency on how the actions are carried out across programs.

Dr. Michael Wichman stated that Ms. Phelps was recognized at the recent Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) annual meeting with the On the Front Line Award, which honors an individual outside of the APHL membership who makes significant contributions to the advancement of public health laboratory science and/or practice. The Board members added their congratulations.

2. APPROVAL OF JUNE MINUTES

Ms. Root asked whether any members had comments regarding the June minutes; there were none. Mr. Dave Speis moved to accept the minutes with no changes, and Dr. Jim Seiber seconded the motion. The Board approved the June minutes unanimously with no discussion.

3. UPDATES ON CURRENT TOPICS

Dr. Wichman explained that Ms. Silky Labie is leading the Task Group regarding the Interagency Data Quality Task Force (IDQTF) and data quality objectives (DQO) issue, which is focused on the goal of engaging the IDQTF. The Task Group drafted a letter to the IDQTF Chair, which was forwarded to the full Board for input. Mr. Speis agreed with the letter with one minor editorial change that he suggested. Mr. Speis moved to accept the letter to send to the

Agency following editorial review and formatting by Ms. Kristen LeBaron. Dr. Dallas Wait seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Dr. Wichman explained that a related DQO issue is that many state wastewater limits are too low to be attained by current methods. He asked ELAB members their thoughts on whether and how to proceed on this issue. Ms. Root was surprised at the lack of understanding of the methodology limits compared to drinking water quality limits; those setting the limits must engage the laboratories to set appropriate limits. Mr. Speis agreed that some of the methods are not capable of reaching the limits that are being incorporated into the permits. Dr. Wichman reiterated the importance of engaging the laboratory community. Dr. Seiber wondered whether bioassays exist that are more sensitive than chemical assays and if they could be used. Mr. Speis said that such assays exist and may be more sensitive, but they may not be specific enough. Ms. Root thought that bioassays may not be promulgated, but Mr. Speis indicated that they are. This is a common issue, so Mr. Speis thought that an ELAB Task Group should determine the best approach to address it. Dr. Richard Burrows thought that a difficulty would be that the states release the limits rather than EPA, but the Agency could provide guidance. Ms. Root and Mr. Speis thought that, given that the states will be present at the face-to-face meeting, this discussion will be more fruitful at that meeting.

Ms. Root reported that she had not spoken with Mr. Adrian Hanley (EPA) regarding the Methods Update Rule (MUR) since the June meeting. It may be possible to discuss the MUR with him during the upcoming Forum on Laboratory Accreditation. Ms. Phelps thought that Mr. Hanley would be present at the meeting, and she expects Mr. Lem Walker (EPA) to attend as well. Ms. Root will contact Mr. Hanley regarding his availability to meet with ELAB members during the Forum on Laboratory Accreditation. Dr. Burrows noted that the MUR was close to being finalized, and he was unsure whether the Board could provide additional input. Ms. Root was happy that ELAB had been able to provide some input on the three methods for Mr. Walker, which most likely will be incorporated into the MUR.

Dr. Mahesh Pujari mentioned that the 2012 MUR did not discuss SM 5320B for analysis of total organic halides, and he would like to address this with EPA. Ms. Root said that if this was an issue that ELAB could not speak to directly, Dr. Pujari could provide comment himself during the public comment period. He also is welcome to broach the topic with Mr. Hanley if he is able to meet with Board members during the Forum on Laboratory Accreditation.

Ms. Root reported that the letter regarding acrylonitrile and acrolein was sent to Mr. Hanley on June 19, 2014. Mr. Hanley responded, thanking the Board for its input and explaining that this issue is being addressed in the Method 624 revision. Depending on how it is addressed in Method 624, Dr. Burrows thought that the preservation table in 40 CFR 136 also may need to be updated. It may be possible to discuss this in person at the Forum on Laboratory Accreditation.

In terms of the polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) effort, Dr. Pujari explained that he had examined three methods (Methods 608, 8082A and 1668C) and selected Method 1668C because it is the latest method. He is taking the opportunity to clarify quality assurance/quality control criteria. He was unable to schedule a meeting of the PCB Task Group following the June Board meeting, but he will try to schedule a teleconference of the Task Group prior to the face-to-face meeting.

The letter regarding methods harmonization was sent to the Forum on Environmental Measurements (FEM) on June 20, 2014. Mr. Speis had hoped that there would be a response prior to ELAB's face-to-face meeting so that the Board could discuss it at the meeting; Dr. Wait agreed. Ms. Phelps explained that the FEM plans to discuss the letter at its quarterly meeting, but the meeting has been postponed until August 11, 2014. Ms. Phelps will provide an update at ELAB's September meeting. She added that the FEM currently is undergoing a transition and determining its focus to guide EPA during the next 5 to 10 years.

Ms. Phelps noted that if Mr. Hanley is unable to attend the Forum on Laboratory Accreditation, then it may be possible for ELAB members to meet with him at his office. Dr. Wait only will be in attendance at the Forum on Monday, but he may be able to return if Mr. Hanley only is available to meet later in the week. Ms. Phelps asked the Board members to identify three potential meeting times that she will present to Mr. Hanley and Mr. Walker. Potential meeting times include Monday or Wednesday at lunchtime. Ms. Phelps examined the internal EPA calendar to determine the potential availability of the group that met via teleconference in January to discuss the methods harmonization issue; Ms. Jan Matuszko (EPA) and Dr. Michael Shapiro (EPA) will not be available. Ms. Phelps will contact the EPA staff present during the January teleconference to determine their availability to meet with ELAB members during lunchtime on Monday or Wednesday of the Forum.

4. NEW TOPICS/ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Dr. Wait said that on May 29, 2014, the Office of the Inspector General released a report entitled, *EPA Has Not Implemented Adequate Management Procedures to Address Potential Fraudulent Environmental Data*. Dr. Wait asked whether ELAB had been involved with this topic in the past or if it should be in the future. Ms. Phelps said that she would know more about the intent of the report after she speaks to the office the following Monday, and she can provide an update at a future ELAB meeting. Mr. Speis thought that this was an internal Agency issue, and he did not believe that the Board has been involved in the past. Ms. Phelps thought that the report was intended to promote transparency, and she was unsure whether ELAB could help with any Agency action.

In response to a question from Dr. Wait, Ms. Phelps explained that the new Board term will begin on October 15, 2014, and current members will be notified by September. At this time, she is unable to state which or how many current Board members will be returning.

5. WRAP-UP/REVIEW ACTION ITEMS

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

6. CLOSING REMARKS/ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Jack Farrell moved to close the meeting, and Mr. Speis seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 2:21 p.m.

Attachment A**AGENDA**
ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD

Monthly Teleconference: 866-299-3188/9195415544#

July 16, 2014; 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. (EDT)

Opening Remarks	Root
Approval of June Minutes	Root
Updates on Current Topics	All
Method Update Rule	
Acrylonitrile and Acrolein	
Polychlorinated Biphenyls	
Methods Harmony	
Interagency Data Quality Task Force/Data Quality Objectives Process	
New Topics/Issues for Consideration	Root
Wrap-Up/Review Action Items	Wade/LeBaron
Closing Remarks/Adjourn	Root

Attachment B**MEMBERSHIP LISTING AND GUESTS****ELAB TELECONFERENCE****July 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
Y	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)
N	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
N	Ms. Susan L. Mazur	Florida Power and Light Representing: Utility Water Act Group
N	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 June 2014 meeting minutes and send them to Ms. Phelps via email.
2. Ms. LeBaron will edit the letter engaging the IDQTF and forward it to Ms. Root to send to the Agency, copying the Board members.
3. Ms. Root will contact Mr. Hanley regarding his availability to meet with ELAB members during the Forum on Laboratory Accreditation.
4. Ms. Phelps will contact the EPA staff present during the January methods harmonization teleconference to determine their availability to meet with ELAB members during lunchtime on Monday or Wednesday of the Forum.
5. Dr. Pujari will try to schedule a PCB Task Group teleconference prior to the August face-to-face meeting.

Attachment D

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



Signature Chair

Ms. Patsy Root

Print Name Chair