

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

**SUMMARY OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
Monthly Teleconference Meeting: 866-299-3188/9195415544#
July 20, 2016; 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 20, 2016. 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.

ROLL CALL/INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Dr. Dallas Wait, Chair of ELAB, and Ms. Lara Phelps, Designated Federal Official (DFO) of ELAB, welcomed participants and guests to the teleconference. Ms. Kristen LeBaron called the roll of the Board members and guests.

APPROVAL OF JUNE MINUTES

Dr. Wait asked for comments regarding the Board's June meeting minutes, other than the edits that Dr. Mike Delaney submitted via email. Dr. Mahesh Pujari moved to accept the May minutes with Dr. Delaney's changes; Dr. Delaney seconded the motion. The Board voted to approve the June minutes with one abstention; however, because of the abstention a quorum was not present to approve the minutes. Approval of the June meeting minutes will be added the agenda of ELAB's face-to-face meeting in August.

OPENING REMARKS AND UPDATES FROM THE DFO

Ms. Phelps reported that EPA's Office of the Inspector General (OIG) periodically evaluates Agency programs and activities. A current OIG focus is Agency Federal Advisory Committees that have provided letters and/or advice regarding science issues; ELAB has been selected for the evaluation. The period covered by the evaluation is fiscal years 2013 through 2015 (i.e., October 2012 through September 2015).

During this review, Ms. Phelps learned that several Board products (e.g., letters) had not been published on the ELAB website, which has been corrected. Also, in the move from the previous website system to the new Drupal system, EPA responses to the Board's letters were lost. EPA is in the process of revising the Board's website; new information will be added, and a new column format for displaying ELAB products and their accompanying EPA responses will be implemented.

Ms. Phelps explained that she had supplied Dr. Wait's to the OIG at the office's request, so he can expect to be contacted. Dr. Wait asked about the level of detail that he will need to provide to the OIG regarding Board activities. Ms. Phelps thought that the reporting period was chosen so that the OIG could be introduced to how the Board works and understand the general processes that are in place; specific details about specific products should not be needed.

Ms. Phelps made the Board members aware that the website may be updated daily, so they should be prepared for frequent changes if they visit often. For example, EPA no longer allows images on many of its Web pages to improve the clarity of communication and decrease distractions. As a result, no pictures remain on the Board's website, and Ms. Phelps has been unsuccessful in her attempts to restore them.

Ms. Phelps reported that the Board membership package has been submitted to the EPA Administrator for approval. In response to a question from Dr. Wait, Ms. Phelps explained that if the membership package is approved, ELAB will have nine new members. With the number of new members outnumbering the returning members, it will be important to ensure that training is conducted for the new members. Ms. Phelps reported that the Board will have lost nine members during the current membership period once those members who have reached their term limits rotate off of ELAB on September 30. Ms. Phelps will do her best to ensure that the ELAB website is updated so that once approved, new members can visit the website to familiarize themselves with the Board's processes and current tasks. An administrative meeting for returning and new members, which will include training, will be held in September. At least two and as many as five potential new members will be present at the Forum on Environmental Accreditation/Environmental Measurement Symposium in August.

UPDATES ON CURRENT TOPICS

Interagency Data Quality Task Force/Data Quality Objectives Process

This task has been tabled until ELAB receives a response from the Forum on Environmental Measurements (FEM). Ms. Phelps reported that the Board likely will receive a response letter from the FEM prior to ELAB's August meeting.

Methods Harmonization

This task has been tabled until ELAB receives further instruction from the Agency. The Board received an acknowledgement letter from Mr. Mike Shapiro (EPA) explaining that EPA is investigating the issue. Ms. Phelps reported that the FEM will meet on August 3, so she should be able to present an update at the Board's face-to-face meeting.

In-Line and On-Line Monitoring

In Mr. Michael Flournoy's absence, Ms. Aurora Shields reported that the Task Group had met the previous day. EPA is conducting pilot studies and requested that the Task Group investigate technologies being used in the field and by other organizations, such as the U.S. Geological Survey, to determine whether additional comments can be provided to EPA. ELAB may be able to work with a specific audience within EPA regarding in-line and on-line monitoring. Ms. Phelps added that she is meeting with Ms. Denise Shaw (EPA) and Dr. Joel Creswell (EPA) the following week to determine the best process for ELAB to assist the Agency with this matter because of the dual nature (i.e., short-term and long-term activities) of EPA's request to the Board.

Selected Ion Monitoring (SIM)

Dr. Delaney explained that the Task Group members, including four external experts, have been submitting comments regarding the proposed set of minimum SIM criteria. He has incorporated the comments and provided the Task Group members with the third draft of the proposed criteria. He would like to provide the cover letter and proposed criteria to the Board prior to its August meeting so that the full ELAB can discuss these documents at that meeting.

The Board discussed the best manner in which to present this topic at the face-to-face meeting. Dr. Delaney can summarize the letter section by section to familiarize the audience with the effort and the letter.

The ELAB members discussed including “shoulds” in the proposed criteria, which essentially set forth minimum requirements (i.e., the minimum of what *must* be done vs. what *should* be considered). Dr. Wait’s rationale is that changing the language to “should” would address those cases in which only two ions are available for evaluation, rather than the three suggested in the criteria. To resolve this, Ms. Silky Labie suggested the following language: “...evaluate at least three ions (unless three are not available).” The Board supported this idea.

Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET) Testing

Dr. Wait reported that the Task Group has developed its suggestions regarding The NELAC Institute’s (TNI) WET Expert Committee white paper. The goal is to receive additional comments from participants at the Board’s face-to-face meeting before moving forward. Dr. Wait will contact the Chair of the TNI WET Expert Committee to invite a representative to present about its white paper at the Board’s August face-to-face meeting. The Board’s ultimate product must be submitted to Ms. Phelps; TNI can be copied, or Ms. Phelps can forward the response to the Institute.

In response to a comment by Dr. Pujari that the state of California and EPA Region 9 are moving to different testing, Ms. Patty Carvajal noted the need to focus on the specific directive of this Task Group. Dr. Wait agreed, noting that a new Task Group could be established to explore the issue raised by Dr. Pujari.

NEW TOPICS/ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Cyanide Methodology

Dr. Delaney explained that approximately 2 percent of drinking-water cyanide results are identified as “detects,” most of which are below the maximum contaminant limit. Although this does not affect a significant number of public water supplies, it is a significant problem for the public water supplies that do receive false positives. Dr. Delaney would like to obtain additional input from participants at the face-to-face meeting. He also, through Ms. Phelps, will contact EPA’s Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water (OGWDW).

Dr. Delaney has contacted OI Analytical, which is interested in participating in a cyanide methodology study but does not have the resources to lead it. ASTM International might be able to support such an effort, and Dr. Delaney is considering following up with this organization.

Additional Topics/Issues for Consideration

Dr. Pujari reported that EPA is making progress on the polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) congener issue that the Board had explored in the past. ELAB can review the data when they are available.

Dr. Wait will speak to Mr. Adrian Hanley (EPA) during the upcoming face-to-face meeting regarding how ELAB can be involved with the next Method Update Rule (MUR) process.

PREPARATION FOR FACE-TO-FACE MEETING

The Board members discussed the PowerPoint presentation that Ms. LeBaron had developed for the upcoming face-to-face meeting. Dr. Pujari would like to add a slide with information about the PCB congener issue; no one objected to this addition. Dr. Delaney would like approximately 20 minutes for his cyanide presentation. Ms. Phelps volunteered to provide the information about the Board's purpose and mission, which is presented as a standard slide at each face-to-face meeting. Those ELAB members responsible for adding information to slides will send the information to Dr. Wait and Ms. LeBaron no later than July 29.

WRAP-UP/SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

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

CLOSING REMARKS/ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Delaney moved to adjourn the meeting; Dr. Pujari seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:26 p.m.

Attachment A

**AGENDA
ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD
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Roll Call/Introduction of Guests	Wait/LeBaron
Approval of Prior Minutes	Wait
Opening Remarks and Updates From the DFO	Phelps
Updates on Current Topics	
Interagency Data Quality Task Force/Data Quality Objectives Process: Leibovitz	
Methods Harmonization: Wait	
In-Line and On-Line Monitoring: Flournoy	
Selected Ion Monitoring: Delaney	
Whole Effluent Toxicity Testing: Carvajal	
New Topics/Issues for Consideration	Wait
Cyanide Methodology	Delaney
Preparation for Face-to-Face Meeting	Wait
Wrap-Up/Summary of Action Items	Wait/LeBaron
Closing Remarks/Adjournment	Phelps/Wait

Attachment B**PARTICIPANTS LIST****Board Members**

Attendance (Y/N)	Name	Affiliation
Y	Dr. A. Dallas Wait (Chair)	Gradient Representing: Consumer Products Industry
N	Dr. Henry Leibovitz (Vice-Chair)	Rhode Island State Health Laboratories Representing: Association of Public Health Laboratories
Y	Ms. Lara Phelps (DFO)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Representing: EPA
Y	Ms. Lu-Ann Kleibacker (Alternate DFO)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Representing: EPA
Y	Ms. Patricia (Patty) Carvajal	San Antonio River Authority Representing: Watershed/Restoration
Y	Dr. Michael (Mike) Delaney	Massachusetts Water Resources Authority Representing: Massachusetts Water Resources Authority
N	Mr. Michael Flournoy	Eurofins Environment Testing USA Representing: American Council of Independent Laboratories
N	Dr. Deyuan (Kitty) Kong	Chevron Energy Technology Company Representing: Chevron
Y	Ms. Sylvia (Silky) Labie	Environmental Laboratory Consulting & Technology, LLC Representing: Third-Party Assessors
Y	Dr. Mahesh 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
N	Ms. Michelle Wade	Kansas Department of Health and the Environment Representing: Laboratory Accreditation Bodies

PARTICIPANTS LIST (CONT)**Contractors and Guests**

Attendance (Y/N)	Name	Affiliation
Y	Ms. Kristen LeBaron (Contractor)	The Scientific Consulting Group, Inc. (SCG)
Y	Mr. Nick Dantonio (Guest)	Hunton & Williams, LLP
Y	Mr. Eric Fischbach (Guest)	Gradient

Attachment C

ACTION ITEMS

1. The Board will vote to approve the June minutes during its August meeting.
2. Dr. Wait will contact the Chair of the TNI WET Expert Committee to invite a representative to present about its white paper at the Board's August face-to-face meeting.
3. Dr. Delaney, through Ms. Phelps, will contact EPA's OGWDW regarding cyanide methodology.
4. Dr. Delaney will contact ASTM International regarding its support of a cyanide methodology study.
5. Dr. Wait will speak to Mr. Hanley during the upcoming face-to-face meeting regarding how ELAB can be involved in the next MUR process.
6. Those ELAB members responsible for adding information to slides for the face-to-face meeting will send the information to Dr. Wait and Ms. LeBaron no later than July 29.

7. Attachment D

I hereby certify that this is the final version of the minutes for the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board Meeting held on July 20, 2016.



Signature, Chair

Dr. Dallas Wait

Print Name, Chair