

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Monthly Teleconference: 202-991-0477/7939251#, October 17, 2018; 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. ET

MEETING SUMMARY

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB or Board) teleconference meeting was held on October 17, 2018. The agenda for this meeting is provided as Attachment A, a list of meeting participants is provided as Attachment B, and action items are included as Attachment C. The official certification of the minutes by the Chair or Vice-Chair and the Designated Federal Officer is included as Attachment D.

ROLL CALL/ INTRODUCTION

Dr. Michael Delaney welcomed the members and guests to the meeting. He took roll of the members present and guests.

APPROVAL OF THE PRIOR MINUTES

Dr. Delaney asked the ELAB to approve the minutes from the September meeting. If new members have not read through them, they may abstain. Mr. Frederici, Dr. Chauvin, Ms. Crandall, Mr. Gossett, and Mr. Thal abstained. The minutes were moved for approval by Mr. Brand Meadows and the motion was seconded by Ms. Sharon Mertens. The Board unanimously approved the minutes.

OPENING REMARKS AND UPDATES FROM THE DFO

Dr. Thomas O'Farrell, the Designated Federal Official (DFO) for ELAB, welcomed everyone to today's meeting. Dr. O'Farrell proceeded to introduce the six new ELAB members. Dr. Francoise Chauvin is a Quality Assurance Supervisor with the New York City Department of Environmental Protection. She is responsible for the quality assurance of microbiology, chemistry (metal and organic), and testing drinking water. Dr. Chauvin added that her Committee work was with the TNI Chemistry Expert Committee and they did work with MDLs and calibration.

Ms. Stacie Crandall is the Chief of the Laboratory Division with the Hampton Roads Sanitation District. Prior to that, she was the Quality Assurance Manager for HRSD for 15 years. Ms. Crandall added that she is excited to work with everyone and appreciates the opportunity.

Mr. Ray Frederici is the Vice President of Quality Environmental Health and Safety with TestAmerica. He has held quality management positions in the environmental laboratory sector

for 30 years. Mr. Frederici thanked Dr. O'Farrell and said he looks forward to joining the Committee.

Dr. Jayesh Gandhi is the Regulatory Affairs Manager with MetrohmUSA and has over 20 years of experience developing environmental measurement methods and instrumentation and has served on EPA FTM Committees. Dr. Gandhi stated that he is excited to join the Committee and appreciates the opportunity to serve.

Mr. Richard Gossett is the owner of PHYSIS Environmental Laboratories, Inc. in Anaheim, CA. He has over 40 years of experience in project management, quality control, and method development, and certification and has served on several committees for environmental measurement organizations. Mr. Gossett stated that he is thankful for the opportunity and is looking forward to being on the Committee.

Mr. David Thal is a Principal Chemist with Environmental Standards Company and has over 30 years of experience in the development, application, and validation of advanced analytical methods. Mr. Thal expressed his thanks to everyone who has been serving and that he is happy to help in any way.

Dr. O'Farrell added that everyone will be receiving a PDF from him of the membership acceptance form. He requested that it be filled out and PDF'd back to him. Dr. O'Farrell will also be sending an invitation letter from the Administrator that will be sent via PDF and a hardcopy by mail as well.

Dr. O'Farrell wanted to remind everyone that the next meeting will be the day before Thanksgiving and requested that everyone respond to the electronic invite in order to determine whether there will be a quorum.

TASK GROUP UPDATES ON CURRENT TOPICS

The Board possesses broad expertise and works on a variety of topics identified by ELAB members, the Agency or the environmental laboratory community. The Board addresses these topics through temporary Task Groups. The Task Group leaders or their representatives provided a report of current topics/activities.

Selected Ion Monitoring (SIM)

Dr. Delaney announced that everyone should have received a proposed letter to go back to EPA with some minor changes to the minimum SIM criteria that has been in discussion over the last 1-2 years. Recently, we received a few comments back from EPA and we have made minor changes to the document to address those comments and it has been looked at by the SIM task group. We are making suggestions to EPA about minimum SIM criteria that should be used. Dr. Delaney made the motion for approval of the SIM minimum criteria letter to be sent back to EPA. The motion was approved. This will be placed in the inactive topics category unless we receive a substantive response from EPA on it.

User-Generated Library Acceptance Criteria

Dr. Delaney stated that at the last meeting, the Committee voted to send the letter drafted by Dr. Brian Buckley and the task group to EPA to engage them in a discussion on mass spectral libraries and has not received a response from EPA yet. Dr. O'Farrell replied that we are reading the letter and preparing to send it out to all the relevant parties within a week. Dr. O'Farrell also added that three offices within the Office of Research and Development (ORD) are being merged into one office: OSA (Office of the Science Advisor), OSP (Office of Science Policy), and NCER (National Center for Environmental Research) which is the extramural grant arm of ORD. The new office will be called the Office of Science Integration and Policy (OSIP). Dr. Jennifer Orme-Zavaleta will still be the point of contact to report to. OSA will retain all its functions, including management of ELAB. Dr. Delaney replied to Dr. O'Farrell inquiring if there will need to be changes to the ELAB Charter and asked if the Committee is still allowed to advise the Administrator. Dr. O'Farrell replied to Dr. Delaney stating that there may be changes upcoming to the ELAB Charter but not because of the merge and that ELAB will still be allowed to advise the Science Advisor.

Acrolein and Acrylonitrile

ELAB had lobbied EPA for wastewater testing to allow volatile samples for acrolein and acrylonitrile to be preserved at pH 2 instead of pH 4 to 5. ELAB sent data to EPA and a response from EPA was received stating that data was insufficient to be compelling enough to change it. Dr. Mahesh Pujari checked with Mr. Adrian Hanley but has not received a firm answer. The question was how many samples would be sufficient to EPA to make this preservation change. Dr. Delaney is unsure about what the answer is at the moment and ELAB is not able to generate its own data per say. Ms. Crandall stated that her workplace has a large volume of organic expertise and offered to put something together to contribute to the discussion. Dr. Delaney will discuss this with Ms. Crandall further offline. Ms. Mertens inquired if we received a response from Mr. Hanley saying this is not worth pursuing. Dr. O'Farrell stated that Mr. Hanley wanted Dr. Pujari to talk to him offline on that issue.

PCB Congener Method

Dr. Delaney provided an update on improving the PCB Congener Method. A single laboratory validation was done and now they are doing a multi-laboratory validation. Ms. Crandall, Dr. Pujari, and Dr. Delaney were talking about providing samples to EPA from different industrial and water treatment sources that EPA has contracted to provide labelled standards for the congeners and they are preparing to do the multi-laboratory validation this fall. A meeting was held a couple weeks ago with laboratories that were interested. If the multi-laboratory validation is successful, it will be proposed as an addition to Part 136. The method has not yet been released.

Drinking Water Program Adoption of Recent Approved Methods

Dr. Delaney shared that there was a draft letter written by Ms. Debra Waller to be sent to EPA. The letter says that it would be a good thing if only the most recent version of methods were approved for drinking water so everybody is using the same methods. Dr. Delaney stated that

this letter is being proposed for approval by ELAB for EPA with recent additions made to it and Dr. Delaney asked Ms. Waller if she has any other words before motioning for approval. Ms. Waller added that she wanted to make this about data quality and not money and moved to take this letter to a vote. Dr. Delaney seconded Ms. Waller and moved this letter to a vote by asking the group if they are in favor of sending this letter. Mr. Gossett abstained. The letter is now approved and will be finalized by Dr. Delaney and sent to Dr. O'Farrell to write a cover letter and send it to the Agency.

Suggestions for ELAB from August Meeting

Dr. Delaney recalled the suggestions for ELAB received at the August meeting regarding topics that ELAB should work on. The suggestions have been transcribed into the September meeting minutes and you can see the suggestions that were received. One particular suggestion was that somebody should put together a single volatile organics method that works for everybody. Dr. Delaney asked if somebody wants to work on a single volatile organics method.

600-Series Methods

Dr. Henry Leibovitz announced that a few minutes ago, everyone should have received an email that was brought to ELAB's attention that there are serious issues associated with the 600-series methods as the methods update rule is going through the process of review. Dr. Richard Burrows from TestAmerica brought to the Board's attention that they should take this up in discussion. Dr. Burrows identified three major issues: (1) for all 3 methods (608.3, 624.1, and 625.1) these issues are the coefficient of determination requirement of 0.920, which is far looser than other EPA methods. Dr. Burrows feels this could result in poor calibration curves and poor data quality. (2) Acceptance of second tries for various quality controls including continuing calibrations, laboratory control samples, and method blanks. (3) Regarding Method 608.3 for pesticides and the requirement to meet the MDLs and MLs given in the method Dr. Burrows feels that the GC/ECD is not selective enough to obtain reliable data at these levels. At this point in time, we have not convened a task group to take on this topic but the Board agreed that it is worthwhile to create one and Dr. Leibovitz agreed to put one together. Dr. Leibovitz wanted to offer up an opportunity to new members as well as others to get involved in this task force. Some of the new members were interested but wanted to take some time to think about it. Dr. Delaney reminded ELAB members that there is a limitation on task groups in that they cannot consist of more than half of the membership otherwise it will be considered a quorum. It needs to be a subset of ELAB members who meet at a convenient time to propose and talk about topics. They then draft a letter that will be presented to ELAB, and are welcome to call on the expertise of nonmembers. The most difficult part of a task group is scheduling a meeting. Dr. Leibovitz will chair the task group and plans to coordinate times to meet with those who are interested.

OGWDW Guidance on Drinking Water MDLs

Dr. Delaney reminded members that at the August meeting, somebody in the audience brought up this document that EPA had written about MDLs for drinking water analysis and his understanding is that it went from EPA headquarters to the Regions and ultimately the States. The individual who brought it up said it was unclear whether it was guidance or policy and stated that it is confusing and sends mixed messages and that it would be helpful if EPA could clarify

that. Dr. Delaney will distribute this document to everybody after the meeting. Dr. Delaney is unsure of what the outcome will be on this but any interest or thoughts are welcome. Ms. Waller, Ms. Mertens, and Dr. Delaney will give an update at the next meeting on what ELAB will do about the letter. Ms. Mertens added that part of the issue is the MDL guidance but the bigger issue for drinking water is once we have a methods update rule, additional memos just go to a select group (e.g., Regions, States). This muddies the waters because some people will take that as guidance, others will take it as new requirements, and laboratories having to carry this out are not all receiving this. The bigger issue to consider is advising EPA that this is not a good way to conduct business. EPA should not regulate by guidance.

Inactive Topics

1. Cyanide Methodology

Dr. Delaney announced that there is no update at this time. EPA has worked on a revision to a drinking water cyanide document and is not ready to release that yet.

2. Whole Effluent Toxicity PT Standards

Dr. Leibovitz had some recommendations for the TNI Chemistry Committee and submitted his own personal ideas that do not represent the Board. There has been an ongoing debate within programs in EPA on whether all laboratories should follow the same instructions performing the same tests for whole effluent toxicity proficiency test (PT) samples or should the laboratories be allowed to perform the proficiency test according to the routine conditions that they use in their respective laboratories for the permits they support. ELAB wrote to EPA and recommended that whole effluent toxicity PTs should be performed following the same set of instructions across all laboratories. This recommendation went over well with some at EPA, but not others. ELAB does not have anything else further to contribute on this issue at this time.

3. Drinking Water Certification Officer's Training Course

Ms. Mertens stated at the last meeting that ELAB did not see anything further to pursue with this. EPA took some of our recommendations. Ms. Mertens proposed taking this off the list as a done deal unless somebody has something new to add.

4. In-Line/On-Line Monitoring Interagency

Mr. Michael Flournoy proposed taking this topic off the list until EPA brings it up again. He has not heard anything further from EPA's Mr. Lemuel Walker on this.

5. Inter-agency Data Quality Task Force/Data Quality Objective Process

Dr. Leibovitz addressed a close out letter that everyone should have received as an email attachment. The letter sums up what the issue was that ELAB task group investigated, which was brought to ELAB by the environmental lab testing community. There was frustration that contract laboratories are not involved early enough in the quality assurance project planning process. The question then became "how do we get them involved and who do we need to speak to?" The task group spoke with someone from DoD and EPA regarding the interagency data

quality task force which involves multiple branches in the government. Dr. Leibovitz learned through the meetings that this is a process that is dictated by the prime contractors themselves. The only way to educate the prime contractors is to have organizations representing them conduct outreach and training on the benefits of involving laboratories early in the quality assurance planning process. The final letter to EPA says that ELAB has completed its investigation and the final recommendation explains that EPA should reach out to organizations such as ACIL and the Environmental Business Institute. Dr. Leibovitz asked that the Board review the letter and consider whether or not it is ready to be sent.

Dr. Delaney asked if all are in favor of sending the letter. Mr. Gossett has not seen it and has opted to abstain. Dr. Chauvin also abstained. The letter was been approved and will be sent along. If a response is received, ELAB will consider revisiting the topic.

6. Addressing Emerging Contaminants

This is an inactive topic and ELAB is awaiting on further guidance from EPA.

NEW TOPICS/ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Dr. Buckley asked if ELAB could be involved in providing guidance to EPA on QA/QC on any methods and measurements ranging from new instrumentation to citizen science data.

Dr. Delaney explained that ELAB is what you make it to be. Members are encouraged to engage us with problems, concerns, major issues.

WRAP-UP/SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

Dr. Delaney announced he will put together the list of action items with Dr. O'Farrell. Everyone will fill out acceptance forms and return them to Dr. O'Farrell.

CLOSING REMARKS/ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Leibovitz moved to adjourn the meeting and the motion was seconded Dr. Buckley the motion. The Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 2:19 pm.

Attachment A

AGENDA
Teleconference Numbers 202-991-0477 / 7939251#
October 17, 2018
Webconference:
epawebconferencing.acms.com/ofarrell1/

- I. Call Meeting to Order Delaney
- II. Introduction of Board Members/Roll Call Board
- III. Approval of Minutes for Previous Meeting Delaney
- IV. Remarks and Updates from the DFO O'Farrell
- V. Updates on Current Topics
 - a. Selected Ion Monitoring Delaney
 - b. User-Generated Library Acceptance Criteria..... Buckley
 - c. Acrolein and Acrylonitrile Preservation and pH..... Delaney
 - d. Improving PCB Congener Method Option.....Delaney
 - e. Drinking Water Program Adoption of Recent Approved Methods..... Waller
 - f. Suggestions for ELAB from August Meeting Waller
 - g. 600-Series Methods Leibovitz
 - h. OGWDW guidance on drinking water MDLs Delaney
 - i. Inactive topics awaiting feedback/input:
 - Cyanide Methodology Delaney
 - Whole Effluent Toxicity proficiency study standards..... Leibovitz
 - Drinking Water Certification Officer's Training Course.....Mertens
 - In-Line/On-Line Monitoring..... Flournoy
 - Interagency Data Quality Task Force/Data Quality Objective Process.....Leibovitz
 - Addressing Emerging Contaminants Mertens
- VI. New Topics/Issues for Consideration Delaney
- VII. Wrap-Up/Summary of Action Items O'Farrell/Delaney
- VIII. Closing Remarks/Adjourn O'Farrell/Delaney

Attachment B

PARTICIPANTS LIST

Board Members Attendance (Y/N)	Name	Affiliation
Y	Dr. Michael (Mike) Delaney (Chair)	Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) Representing: MWRA
Y	Mr. Michael Flournoy (Vice-Chair)	Eurofins Environment Testing USA Representing: American Council of Independent Laboratories
Y	Dr. Thomas O'Farrell (DFO)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Representing: EPA
N	Dr. Kim Anderson	Oregon State University Representing: Academia-Oregon State University
Y	Dr. Brian Buckley	Rutgers Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute Representing: Academia and Laboratory—Rutgers
Y	Dr. Francoise Chauvin	NYC Dept. of Environmental Protection Representing: NYCDEP
N	Dr. Deyuan (Kitty) Kong	Chevron Energy Technology Company

		Representing: Chevron
Y	Ms. Stacie Crandall	Hampton Roads Sanitation District Representing: HSRD
Y	Dr. Henry Leibovitz	Rhode Island State Health Laboratories Representing: Association of Public Health Laboratories
Y	Mr. Brad Meadows	Babcock Laboratories, Inc. Representing: Commercial Laboratory— Babcock Laboratories, Inc.
Y	Ms. Sharon Mertens	Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District Representing: The NELAC Institute
Y	Mr. Richard Gossett	PHYSIS Environmental Labs Representing: PHYSIS Environmental Labs
Y	Mr. David Thal	Environmental Standards Co. Representing: Environmental Standards Co.
Y	Dr. Jayesh Gandhi	Metrohm USA Representing: Metrohm USA
Y	Ms. Debra (Deb) Waller	New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Representing: State

		Government—NJDEP
Y	Mr. Ray Frederici	TestAmerica Representing: TestAmerica

PARTICIPANTS LIST (CONT)

Contractors and Guests Attendance (Y/N)	Name	Affiliation
Y	Ms. Manisha Kumar	Contractor at EPA
Y	Jeff Loewe	NiSource Environmental
Y	Sandy McDonald	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Attachment C

Action Items

1. **All**—fill out and return your acceptance form.
2. **All**—confirm your availability for the November 21st meeting, which is the day before Thanksgiving.
3. **All**—please accept an open invitation to put things on the board's agenda or to bring up for discussion at our meetings. ELAB will be what you make of it.
4. **Mike D.** - needs a better phone connection.
5. **Mike D. and Tom** - finalize the September minutes.
6. **Mike D.** - finalize three approved letters and send to Tom for distribution.
7. **Mike D.** - check with Adrian Hanley about acrolein preservation to see how many samples EPA would require to approve a preservation change.
8. **Henry** - schedule a meeting of the 600-series task group and invite Francoise, Rich, Dave, Jay, and Ray to participate.
9. **Brian** - continue to work on his thoughts on universal guidelines for judging the quality of data, including field sensors and citizen science.
10. **Tom** - try to track down the status of the EPA policy on chemistry method validation that was mentioned in the August minutes.
11. **Deb, Sharon, and Mike D.** – continue to discuss the EPA drinking water MDL document and what ELAB should suggest to EPA. Mike D. will send Deb's comments on this document to the board.

Attachment D

I hereby certify that this is the final version of the minutes for the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board Meeting held on October 17, 2018.

Michael F. Delaney

X

Dr. Michael Delaney
Chair

X

Thomas O'Farrell, 11/27/18

Dr. Thomas O'Farrell
Designated Federal Officer