

**SUMMARY OF THE  
ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD  
FACE-TO-FACE MEETING  
January 16, 2008; 9:00 – 12:00 PM PST**

The Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB) held a face-to-face meeting on January 16, 2008 from 9:00 – 12:00 PM PST. The original agenda for this meeting is provided as Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. Action items are included in Attachment C. The official signature of the Chair or Vice-Chair is included in Attachment F. Please note that the minutes for this meeting are somewhat brief due to an unfortunate reception problem with the recording made of the discussion.

**INTRODUCTION**

Ms. Lara Autry (USEPA/ORD) welcomed Board members. Ms. Autry then handed the meeting over to the ELAB chair, Dr. Jim Plett, who took a roll call of the Board.

**AGENDA ITEMS**

**APPROVAL OF OR CHANGES TO PREVIOUS MEETING/CALL MINUTES**

Minutes from November 29, 2007 Meeting – Dr. Plett asked for comments on the minutes from the previous meeting. Minutes were approved by the Board.

**WORK GROUP CORRESPONDENCE – FEM/RESPONSE FROM EPA**

ELAB received a response from the EPA to their letter regarding Sampling/Handling issues. Since the problem seems to have been called to the correct persons attention and follow-up taken, there were no further concerns to discuss on this matter.

**WORK GROUP REPORTS – DEFINITIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Ms. Judy Morgan provided an overview of the activities of the Monitoring Work Group. She also talked about the survey her laboratory had conducted regarding the PT programs.

Dr. Jeff Flowers discussed the activities of the Laboratory Management Work Group. ??

Mr. Jeff Lowry presented an overview of the Measurement and Technology Work Group.??

**PENDING AND NEW BUSINESS**

Website status

Dr. Plett asked Ms. Autry to provide an update on the status of the ELAB web page. Ms. Autry noted that the website is complete, but has not been posted yet. The delay was due to another website launching that had challenges with ELAB's next in the line to be released.

PT white paper

Dr. Pletl noted that the Board has been discussing the issue of the frequency of PT testing. He also indicated that Mr. Dechant, Ms. Morgan and Mr. Wyeth have been working on a draft PT letter.

Mr. Dechant?? discussed some issues related to the PT programs. He noted that...??

There was some discussion about how to proceed with the issue of PT testing. Ms. Autry noted that if ELAB has data and information to prove that two PTs a year are better than one or that one does the job, then it is perfectly within ELAB's purview to do that and provide input to EPA.

An ELAB member asked if ELAB should be sending a letter to TNI since they are the ones dealing with the PT programs. Dr. Pletl asked whether that was within ELAB's charter. Ms. Autry noted that ELAB's charter is to be an advisor to EPA. If EPA needs information or even if the Board generates information, the ELAB can provide that information to EPA. But ELAB can't give directions to another organization on what to do; they can work with other stakeholders to provide the Agency with information.

**COMMENTS AND/OR ADDITIONAL ISSUES**

Lynn Bradley noted that the Communication Action team has updated the methods web page in the FEM website to add links to web sites containing Agency methods. There is also contact information for the MICE line and Office of Science and Technology water methods. In the near future, there will be a direct link to the EPA test method web page.

**OPEN FORUM: DISCUSSION AND COMMENTS FROM GUESTS**

Dr. Pletl opened the floor to questions from the audience. The following issues were presented:

- June Flowers, Flowers Chemical Laboratories, clarified for the group the PT White Paper that was prepared by the LAS committee, which she serves as chair. There had been confusion that LASC wanted a single PT per year per analyte, but the paper clearly indicated per matrix/technology/analyte. Barbara Finazzo, EPA Region 2, then spoke of the need for The NELAC Institute (TNI) to be consistent with the EPA Drinking Water program (i.e., one per year), then follow-up for the analytes. She also requested that ELAB continue to be part of this matter.
- Michael Wichman, University of Iowa, made comments/suggestions/requests to EALB in response to a matrix effect encountered in Iowa that allowed data to be flagged as "qualified" data in their reports to the public water supplies. They have seen this happen most often with EPA Method 525.2 where the internal standards are spiked prior to SPE preparation. The issue is that there is no mechanism for flagging that data when it is reported to the state SDWIS. The second issue was also in reference to Method 525.2 as apparently labs are not consistently following the method. Some follow the method and spike the internal standards prior to extraction and others spike after extraction (which is similar to that specified in most other EPA methods). The extraction efficiency is taken into account when spiking prior to extraction and is not when spiking following extraction. This impacts quantitation. The guidance we have received is to follow the method, but if that is not the case with all labs the data in the national database is not consistent. The third related issue is also related to 525.2 for the determination of bis(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate. The MCL is 6 ppb and monitoring trigger is 0.6 ppb. If an internal standard response is low, that can cause an elevated quantitation for the phthalate. Whether the internal is spiked prior to or after extraction can result in significant differences in the quantitated result. Finally, the two "approved" methods for the phthalate are methods 252.2 AND 506. According to NEMI, 506 has method detection limit of 2.25 ppb and 525.2 with MDL of 0.46

## DRAFT

ppb. Both below the MCL of 6 ppb, but with 506 the MDL is greater than the monitoring trigger of 0.6 ppb for the phthalate. This can become an issue for PWS because although bis(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate may not have been detected, the reporting limit is greater than the monitoring trigger and they may be required to increase the monitoring.

- Scott Hoatson, TestAmerica, raised the issue of the third edition of SW-846 methods being no longer available on the web site, having been replaced by the 4<sup>th</sup> edition, and explained that the problem was, even though SW-846 is “guidance”, some or many states have incorporated the third edition into regulations or especially NPDES permits. Lynn Bradley offered that Mr. Barry Lesnik, retired from OSW on December 31, had committed to formatting and submitting ALL third edition methods to the National Environmental Monitoring Index ([www. NEMI.gov](http://www.NEMI.gov)); Ms. Autry affirmed that Mr. Lesnik’s work was good, and that he surely had fulfilled that commitment.

## ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Pletl adjourned the Board meeting at 12:00 p.m. PST.

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Attachment A

**AGENDA**  
**for**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**  
**January 16, 2008; 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM**  
**Newport Beach, CA**

	Topic	Individual(s) Responsible
1	Opening Remarks	DFO
2	Roll Call for ELAB Members	Chair
3	Approval of or changes to Previous Meeting/Call Minutes November 29, 2007	Chair
4	Letter from EPA on sample handling issues	Chair, Dechant, Thomey
5	Work Group Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitoring Work Group</li><li>• Laboratory Management Work Group</li><li>• Measurement and Technology Work Group</li></ul>	Chair Morgan Flowers Lowry
6	Pending and New Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Website status</li><li>• PT white paper</li></ul>	DFO Dechant, Morgan, Wyeth
7	Comments and/or Additional Issues from Board	All
8	Open Forum: Discussion and Comments from Guests	All
9	Review Action Items and Assignments	Chair
10	Adjourn/Closing Remarks	Chair/DFO

**MEMBERSHIP LISTING AND GUESTS**  
**ELAB MEETING**  
**January 16, 2008; 9:00 – 12:00 PM PST**

<b>Attendance (Y/N)</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Y	Dr. Jim Pletl (Chair)	Hampton Roads Sanitation District Representing: Municipal Env. Lab.
N	Mr. Robert (Bob) K. Wyeth	Columbia Analytical Services, Inc. Representing: ACIL
Y	Ms. Lara P. Autry, DFO	US Environmental Protection Agency Representing: EPA
Y	Mr. Gerald (Gary) Dechant	Analytical Quality Associates, Inc. Representing: DOE Analy. Mgmt. Pgm.
Y	Mr. Paul Banfer	EISC (Environnemental Info. Sys. Corp.) Representing: Information Systems
Y	Ms. Nan Thomey	Environmental Chemistry, Inc. Representing: Small Laboratories
Y	Mr. Rock Vitale	Environmental Standards, Inc. Representing: Third Party Assessors
Y	Mr. Eddie Clemons	Golden Specialty Laboratory Representing: INELA
Y	Mr. Scot Cocanour	Promium Representing: Lab. Customers of Information Technology
Y	Dr. Jeff Flowers	Flowers Chemical Laboratories, Inc. Representing: Elected Officials for Local Gvt
Y	Dr. Reza Karimi	Southwest Research Institute Representing: Non-profit Research and Development Organizations with Academia
Y	Mr. Jeff Lowry	Environmental Resource Associates Representing: Proficiency Testing Providers
Y	Ms. Judy Morgan	Environmental Science Corp. Representing: Commercial Env. Lab.
Y	Mr. Joe Pardue	Parallax, Inc. Representing: Clients of QS Services

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Attachment C

## **ACTION ITEMS**

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Attachment E

I hereby certify that these are the final version of minutes for the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board Meeting held on January 16, 2008.

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Signature Chairman

Jim Pletl

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Print Name Chairman