

State Water Resources Control Board

Division of Drinking Water

February 12, 2016

Dear ELAP Laboratory Community,

Thank you for your active participation in Monday's webinar with the ELAP Expert Review Panel. This message is to summarize the primary concerns I heard you express and the actions I am taking to address them:

- 1. The laboratory community needs access to, and adequate time to review, the TNI 2009 Laboratory Standards - Chapter 5 Quality Systems, prior to the webinars ELAP will be holding to discuss the advantages and challenges to the implementation of each option.**

I am taking two actions to address this concern. First, I have secured a TNI laboratory quality system expert to hold a free full-day workshop describing and answering questions about the 2009 TNI Laboratory Standard, Volume 1, specifically Module 2: Quality Systems General Requirements. Controlled copies of the standard will be provided to in-person attendees that day. Copyright laws prohibit wider distribution of the content (something we will have to address should we choose to adopt that standard), but in the interim we have provided the previous version (NELAC 2003) and a document detailing the changes made to the TNI 2009 version. Those are available on our [website](#).

Second, we will delay our 3-part webinar series to provide several weeks after the workshop for you to formulate your questions and concerns. I will send the revised webinar dates once we have finalized a date for the workshop.

- 2. ELTAC should have greater participation in the laboratory standard decision making process. Holding the first ELTAC meeting in the same month as you plan to make a decision does not provide sufficient opportunity to participate.**

I am also taking two actions to address this concern. First, I will fast-track the evaluation of ELTAC nominees and will appoint members before March 1st. The inaugural ELTAC meeting will be in March and will include an agenda item to discuss laboratory standards.

Second, we will hold at least two ELTAC meetings on this topic before making a selection. The first ELTAC meeting will occur before the webinar series and the second after, providing the opportunity for ELTAC to digest and elaborate on thoughts expressed by the community during the webinar. This could slightly delay the selection

of a standard, but we want to have ample community participation before making this important decision.

3. ELAP enforcement actions should be divided into actions related to the administration of the laboratories and actions directly related to laboratory activity.

I have directed staff to follow your suggestion, separating actions related to the application process and laboratory activity violations, e.g. method deviations, reporting and notification failures, and fraudulent laboratory activities. This will clarify the types of enforcement actions ELAP has taken and these metrics will be available to the laboratory community.

I thank you for your feedback and the collaborative spirit in which it was offered. It is a necessary step in building a sustainable, effective program. Please continue to express your concerns as we carry on the very important work of transforming ELAP.

Sincerely,

Christine Sotelo, Chief
Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program