

## Laboratory Certification Standards Review Council Meeting Minutes From 11/1/2016

### Attendance

Council Members: **In Person:** Paul Harris (Chair), Sharon Mertens (Vice Chair), Kevin Freber (Secretary), Tom Kutz, Paul Junio, Miel Barman  
**Via Skype:** Jennifer Peth  
DNR Staff: Steve Geis, Rick Mealy,  
**Via Skype:** Tom Trainor, Brandy Baker-Muhich  
Others in Attendance: RT Krueger (Skype)

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The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am

### **Minutes from meeting of August 2, 2016**

- **Action:** A motion (Freber/ Mertens) to approve the August 2, 2016 minutes, as presented, was unanimously approved.

### **Program Performance FY 2017 YTD**

- Audits - Commercial/Public Health: **11** (35); Municipal/Industrial: **25**(84)
- Reports - Commercial/Public Health: **9** (35); Municipal/Industrial: **22** (84)
  - **Reports Due - Commercial/Public Health: 6; Municipal/Industrial: 4**
- Closures - Commercial/Public Health: **7** (35); Municipal/Industrial: **20** (84)
  - **Open Cases - Commercial/Public Health: 24; Municipal/Industrial: 26**
- For the fiscal year 2017, **65.6%** of reports for audits conducted were issued within 30 days
- There was again interest in having the LabCert web lists be “live” such that real-time lab information on active accreditations was available. We’ve talked about this for many years; the Department lacks the resources to enable such functionality while retaining system security.
- The Council was informed that following an onsite evaluation, Summit Environmental Technologies has opted to withdraw completely from the program in lieu of facing more significant enforcement action. The Council asked if the program could send a letter to the states of Arizona, Florida, and Maine, to inform them of Summit Environmental Technologies’ on-site evaluation findings and the lab’s subsequent withdrawal.

### **Budget Variance Report for FY 2017**

- Unfortunately, due to software changes, we were unable to obtain a more accurate accounting of fiscal 2016 revenues and expenditures or current FY 2017 information. We hope to have one for the next meeting.
- Council members requested that budget information be sent in advance of the January budget session.

### **Other DNR Business**

- Variations - No variance requests were received.
- Staffing Update – Steve Geis provided a brief update. George Bowman will be staying on at least through June 2017, so no LTE hire is necessary. Dave Ekern will be leaving the program in late November 2016 to pursue a new career. Steve Geis working with Human Resources to expedite the recruitment process.
- Using F-test for verifying LOD – Rick Mealy updated the council on efforts by the LabCert program to identify a recognized, defensible means of verifying an LOD annually, as allowed in NR 149. The program has developed a spreadsheet mechanism which uses the F-test, a recognized statistical procedure. It appears to work well for single element analyses. Sharon Mertens encouraged the program to continue exploring the possibilities by looking at more complex, multi-component analyses, such as VOCs.
- Rare Earth Metals & Phosphorus testing – The LabCert program has identified interferences from rare earth metals in both optical ICP and ICP/MS. Kevin Freber encouraged the program to contact Pam Cornish (MolyCorp) or Tom Mulcahy with any questions regarding SorbX-100, which has been recently renamed as RE-100. Mulcahy-Shaw Water retains the exclusive rights for distribution in WI, so Tom could

tell us which facilities are using the product. Freber added that Hartford now uses the product and has it in their permit. He indicated that any information we obtain should be shared with Pam and Tom.

Sharon Mertens stated that she does not believe any labs are looking into rare earth metal interferences using ICP-MS. She also added that rumors suggest that lower permit levels for arsenic in discharges to Lake Michigan may be in the works, which could further impact trace element data.

- Forms of Phosphorus – Paul Harris asked how “soluble” is defined. Does it mean filtration with any filter? [No] A 0.45 um filter? [Yes] Sharon Mertens suggested we look into what Florida has done. The St. John’s River Authority has apparently had low limits for phosphorus for longer than anyone.

### Council Member Concerns/Issues

- Paul Junio offered to draft a letter from the Council to the agency requesting the DNR to provide searchable lab lists.

**Action:** A motion (Junio/ Mertens) to prepare a letter to the agency regarding searchable lab lists for the Chair’s signature was unanimously approved.

- Sharon Mertens asked if there were plans to expand into bacteria accreditation. Steve Geis indicated that he was close to finalizing a survey intended for WWTPs. The goal of the survey is to identify potential workload by learning which facilities do their own bacteria testing and would they still do the testing if rules mandated the quantitrax-based *E. coli* test procedures. Geis added that while DATCP retains statutory authority for microbiology accreditation, LabCert could provide audit assistance. DATCP is considering moving to a 3-yr audit cycle, similar to what LabCert does. Ultimately we need to identify which labs we already accredit and could simply lengthen the audit, as well as those labs that would be new additions to the program workload.

Kevin Freber recommended developing a standard to ensure that labs are performing the test accurately.

- Paul Harris inquired about the status of approaching the Wisconsin League of Municipalities as has been discussed at previous meetings. Steve Geis indicated that he had spoken to Jeff Mayou (Peshtigo WWTP) about it at the recent WWOA conference.
- Harris also asked about the status of changes to NR 149. Tom Trainor has a completed document but still needs to check notes and emails to ensure that all concerns have been incorporated. He hopes to have it completed by February such that a special meeting of the Council could be convened to review it.
- Paul Harris requested continued updates on the following LabCert activities: (1) Waste Testing Parameters, (2) Solid Matrix LODs, (3) F.O.G. vs. HEM, (4) List of LabCert test parameters for which 5 or fewer labs are accredited, and (5) NR 149 progress.

### Next Meeting Date

- **Action:** The next Council meeting was scheduled for 10:00 AM CDT Wednesday, January 4, 2017 at the DNR Science Operations Center (2801 Progress Road, Madison). In the event of inclement weather, an alternate meeting date was scheduled for the same time on Thursday January 12, 2017.

The meeting was adjourned (Freber/Mertens) at 12:15 PM.