Third Party NELAP Accreditation
The Time is Now

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Accreditation Goals

• Ensure conformance to program requirements & standards
• Detect and correct substandard practices
• Ensure protections for end users of measurement data
Trends

• User perception of decreasing quality of government AB capabilities & results
• Increasingly successful and capable Nongovernment ABs available
• Shrinking federal & state budgets
• User perception of lack of AB control and program accountability at TNI
NELAP Today

- Efficient means to access state markets
- Inadequate for federal agency buyers
- Uneven state participation and commitment
- Gov ABs providing poor service at high cost
- Insufficient program accountability for ABs
State ABs

- Many perform very well, some present serious issues
- Resource constraints significantly affect audits, oversight of audits, and follow up on issues discovered in audits
- NELAP creates Two Tier accreditation system
- Inconsistent standards at state tier
- Majority of customers are small municipal/utility labs
- None are ISO 17011 compliant/ILAC recognized
Success Story: DoD Audits

• **Timely**: Scheduled in advance, 3 days two assessors, reports issued at exit debrief, most assessments completed on-time
• **Professional**: Quality of assessors is generally excellent
• **Impartial** – no potential for conflicts of interest
• **Thorough** – Standards based, focused on QA systems & method conformance
• **Cost Effective** – Not inexpensive, but efficient & effective. Add value, reduce user costs by increasing labs in program
• **No Surprises** – ISO 17011 compliant AB process. Issues discussed & resolved during audit. Daily debriefs, effective systems for resolving disputes
“The Big Idea”
Bring private ISO17011 ILAC Recognized ABs into NELAP as primary accreditors of laboratories

What’s in it for ACIL labs?
• NELAP accreditation from a single organization that addresses all national and international conformity assessment needs
• Lower costs,

What’s in it for TNI-NELAP?
Government agency signatories, ISO/ILAC recognition
Legitimacy, Relevance, Recognition
The ACIL Approach

- **Separate** licensing and accreditation services at states
- **Choice:** either primary state AB or an ISO 17011/ILAC recognized non-Government AB
- **Fees** charged are appropriate to the level of effort
- **Accommodate** unique state requirements
- **Loss of accreditation means loss of license(s)**
Benefits

• Improve assessment consistency & standard interpretation
• Likely to reduce state’s staffing costs
• Probably reduce costs for commercial labs
• National and international NELAP relevance/recogniton
• Probably save commercial lab users & taxpayers $
• Improved lab access to NELAP
• Accommodation of unique state requirements
• Likely to increase states participating in NELAP
Concerns

- Shift state AB costs to smaller municipal/utility labs
- Reduced state regulatory “control”
- Outsourcing state government function
- Minutiae of implementation
- Loss of state expertise/capability
Design Considerations

• States recognize ISO 17011 compliant NACLA and/or ILAC and/or TNI recognized ABs
• Level of effort based fees imposed by states
• Labs are free to choose from among several AB’s
• Sustainable mechanism (TNI) to ensure development and improvement of the NELAP standard
Nongovernment Accreditation Works!

- Washington
- New Mexico

Other states moving this way….
- New Jersey, Florida, Minnesota and Texas
Action Items

- Support TNI recognition of private ABs by 2014
  - ISO 17011 compliant and ILAC/NACLA recognized
- Separate licensing and accreditation functions at State ABs
- “Call Out” errant state ABs, ask TNI to discipline them.
- Call out TNI for not disciplining their public AB’s
Action Items II

• Insist State ABs adhere to NELAP standards
• Continue discussion of these issues with state AB’s and state legislators
• Advocate level of effort licensing fees
• ACIL nongovernmental accreditation activities
• Provide financial support for legal/lobby efforts
Conclusion

• ACIL labs need and want NELAP as a means to enter out of home state markets

• NELAP needs nongovernment ABs

• Labs want nongovernment ABs only at costs no more than what we’re paying for state AB accreditation services today