

# The California Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP) Expert Review Panel: Year-One Review Summary

FEBRUARY 2, 2017



Punxsutawney Phil – Sees His Shadow

# A ROUND OF APPLAUSE



# HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Encouragement / Concerns
- ▶ Accomplishments
- ▶ Recommendations
- ▶ Future Directions
- ▶ Summary



# ENCOURAGEMENT

- ▶ Staff are enthusiastic and driven to be the very best
- ▶ Client relationships have been established and have grown
- ▶ Stakeholder relationships flourishing with Environmental Laboratory Technical Advisory Committee (ELTAC) reconstituted
- ▶ Communication exists and has clearly improved





# CONCERN

- ▶ Staff still needs extensive training to meet the program demands
- ▶ Client relationships created a new workload in the form of enforcement unit
- ▶ Stakeholder discussions have gotten bogged down in the weeds
- ▶ Communication needs to be strengthened and grown



# ESTABLISHING ~~POOR~~ CREDIBILITY


- ▶ Credibility – The quality of being trusted and believed in
- ▶ California ELAP ~~lacks~~ <sup>developing</sup> credibility with:
  - ▶ Clients,
  - ▶ Laboratories, and
  - ▶ Other states

Eliminating the 'Gotcha' mentality



# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Management System
- ▶ Enforcement Unit
- ▶ Proficiency Testing (PT) Unit



**Let Your Results  
Do the Talking**





RECOMMENDATION AREAS

**STANDARD DECISION  
&  
RESOURCES**

# STANDARD DECISION

## DONE – 2016 TNI Standard

- ▶ **CONGRATULATIONS** – 58 Item List  
(Does not require Standard modification for everyone to get what they want!)
  - ▶ Majority of list requires 'clarification' not 'modification'
  - ▶ Implementation Process handles the rest
- ▶ Develop an Implementation Process

# 2016 TNI STANDARD

- ▶ ELAP will have the framework for success and to accomplish the 'vision' for the program
- ▶ Stakeholders will have the resources to successfully make the transition to accreditation under a quality system
  - ▶ Access to user groups
  - ▶ Access to special training opportunities thru webinars
- ▶ Clarification process will benefit the entire laboratory community – beyond California



# IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- ▶ Timetable
  - ▶ Be aggressive
  - ▶ Be reasonable
- ▶ Training Resources
  - ▶ Laboratory needs
  - ▶ Assessor needs
  - ▶ Client needs



# RESOURCES

- ▶ Third Party
- ▶ Software
- ▶ Another Panel





# THIRD PARTY

- ▶ **Critical** to eliminate backlog, especially for non-drinking water programs
- ▶ **Critical** to have the access to diversity of expertise needed to meet client needs
- ▶ **Consequence** of not using a third party is an increase in fees to hire more staff due to the new workload

# SOFTWARE

- ▶ Software is available that can significantly help with:
  - ▶ total management of the accreditation process; and
  - ▶ management of proficiency testing (PT) program
- ▶ Software will allow for better use of employee time



# ANOTHER PANEL

- ▶ Hold yourselves accountable
- ▶ Direct and advise beyond program establishment



# WALK BEFORE YOU RUN

- ▶ Focus resources on fundamentals of getting the program operational – Don't be a lone ranger!
- ▶ Need to get program functioning to:
  - ▶ Establish sustainability for the program
  - ▶ Create a PT program or inter-laboratory network
  - ▶ Create a process for emerging contaminants
  - ▶ Consider being a TNI Accreditation Body





# SUMMARY

- ▶ ELAP is not presently achieving its mission, but there is a path to get there
- ▶ **Critical** for the State to support ELAP's efforts and hold ELAP accountable
- ▶ Panel believes ELAP is:
  - ▶ Regaining credibility
  - ▶ Working toward an accreditation process the State and stakeholders support
  - ▶ Working to reliably ensure environmental and public health data used are of known and documented quality
  - ▶ Working on financial sustainability



# NEXT STEPS

- ▶ Mid-March 2017: **DRAFT** Year-One Review Report
- ▶ End-of-March 2017: **FINAL** Year-One Review Report
- ▶ May 3, 2017: Presentation to the Water Board
- ▶ August 7 – 11, 2017: Session/Presentation at the Environmental Measurement Symposium

QUESTIONS???

