



# **ELAP PROGRAM MANAGEMENT ACTIONS TO DATE –**

## **STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC) PERSPECTIVE**

# Disclaimer (per Usual)



- While I have solicited input from the rest of the SAC, ultimately the remarks are my own.



# Some Things Are Not That Different from August



- In preparing slides we noted that a lot of what we said at the August meeting re ELAP actions is still relevant, so you may recognize much of the material in slides.
- That does not mean however that there has not been activity and updates, some **positive** and some **negative**.

# ELAP Short Term Actions



- **Develop a communications strategy**
- **Meet with your clients**
- **Re-energize ELTAC**
- **Send out the checklists for external review**
- **Temporarily accept accreditation/evaluations from other recognized programs**
- **Train your staff and improve management**



## ➤ The Good

- ELAP has dedicated management with a clear interest in improvement.
- Responsiveness to labs has improved.
- ELAP is focused on outreach.

## ➤ The Bad

- Many communications have lacked enough detail to be informative.
- Separate email distribution lists and inadequate management of lists has resulted in questionable decisions

# And the Ugly



- **Disbanding ELTAC prematurely took away a rigorous forum for feedback.**
  - SAC is more informal and harder to ensure participation
  - Technically under the ERP process the SAC is really NOT ELTAC, but is being used (sort of) as such (at our suggestions)
  - Communication on fee increase was very late and incomplete at first and left many wondering if ELAP really had improved.
- **No transparent focus, timeline or plans on how to address outdated regulations, statutes, and forms prior to implementation of ERP recommendations that need regulatory changes.**

# ELAP is Still Playing a Lot of Catch up



- **Most of the “obvious” ELAP activities have the nature of “quick response to show we are doing something in response to ERP recommendations.”**
  - **Mostly initiated right before an ERP meeting**
  - **Reactive rather than proactive**
- **There are however some “behind the scenes” actions that are more long term.**
  - **Reorganized program (Richmond office roles)**
  - **Training on communications**

# External Communications Strategy



- Good to have a formal plan. Suggest more publicity as to the **plan details via Lyris**
- We would **still like** to see ELAP moving faster on their goals to improve the knowledge base of the program (e.g. involvement with other states, TNI, etc). **So far** most of the **accomplished** external communications are more focused on building awareness that it's a NEW ELAP, and **not on improving the guts of the program.**
- **Overall responsiveness to labs is much improved.**
- **However, much of the communication to labs is still somewhat last minute.**



# External Communications Strategy- Continued



- The State Assessors forum does a monthly conference call; it would be beneficial for **multiple ELAP staff** to participate in that call; that will help ensure continuous improvement. **ELAP should report on results of those calls, like AZ does via information updates.** Training is not just a single source one time (e.g. EPA training)
- ELAP proposed a newsletter, but to date there is no forward progress on this. Was that just an idea?
- We **hope that ELAP is reflecting on lessons learned** from already completed activities (both internal and external) and modifying activities accordingly. There still seems to be a reactive vs proactive approach overall.

# Internal Communications Strategy



- Again, it is good to see a plan in writing.
- We **still worry about the “serial training”** implied with the auditor roundtable, since ELAP already recognizes that there is a lack of appropriate skills, even amongst veteran auditors.
- ELAP has **still not shared any of the checklists** for review by the lab community; although ELAP welcomed the idea of SAC/Lab community input, there is **still no forward motion**.

# Meet With Your Clients



- ELAP has had multiple events for certified labs. Some SAC members have attended each of these. **We do not have a good sense of how effective they have been.** The Meet and Greets appear to have been well attended but the bylaws meeting less so.
- We recommend that when ELAP does these meetings they have an **agenda published in advance** to allow labs to evaluate whether they will benefit from attendance.
- **Some kind of report-out** from external client meetings would improve communications and **give labs a better feeling that they were being listened to.**

# Re-Energize ELTAC



- So far this has been **a series of stumbles** and has left many SAC members **questioning the process.**
- ELAP disbanded the original ELTAC essentially in response to ERP recommendation to re-energize, **but gave no thought until recently to still having a forum to solicit input.**
- Most of the “surveys” that ELAP has done on **short notice could have benefited from greater SAC/ELTAC input to ensure meaningful results.**
  - **Example: fee survey goes to multiple individuals at the same lab. How do you interpret the data?**

# Re-energize ELTAC (continued)



- Again, where are the promised checklists for review?
- ELTAC Bylaws (3<sup>rd</sup> iteration) finally look pretty good in content (in response to multiple comments), but have grammatical errors, making them look a bit thrown together to meet a deadline.
- The onus will be on ELAP to ensure meaningful representation on ELTAC and to ensure that ELTAC has meaningful tasks.

# Temporarily Accept Accreditations From A Recognized Program



- As reported by ELAP in August, this was done, but it not clear to us whether all was entirely legal
  - The **devil is still in the details** – what if other programs don't offer accreditation for a specific CA analyte? **What is the CA standard that is being accredited to?**
  - ELAP still needs to have guidelines for how this will work so it is not done on the fly.
- We think ELAP has not yet effectively advertised this option and it could bring more benefit as far as relieving staff pressure.

# Fees Concerns



- Sprung on labs with little notice, even with the workshop. Should have been a more strategic longer term approach.
- Not clear that ELAP will be able to meet it's budget anyway, unless ELAP has a means to send supplemental invoices to labs that have already received bills; and we are not convinced things are well enough organized to do that.
- Ultimately, ELAP should address licensing fees vs accreditation fees.

# Conclusions From SAC Assessment of ELAP Actions



- **ELAP is making progress on the initial recommendations, but it is still very much a work in progress.**
- **In the SAC's view, ELAP is still too internally focused in its actions and needs to engage in more outreach for input.**
  - **Some of the training programs being implemented are a good first step.**
- **Using the SAC in a more formal manner as a temporary ELTAC is a good step forward.**



# Any Questions?



**Andy Eaton, PhD, BCES**  
**Technical Director/Vice President**  
**[andyeaton@eurofinsus.com](mailto:andyeaton@eurofinsus.com)**

**Eurofins Eaton Analytical, Inc.**  
**750 Royal Oaks Drive**  
**Monrovia, CA 91016 USA**

**[www.eatonanalytical.com](http://www.eatonanalytical.com)**

