

ELAP Expert Review Panel Final Quarterly Update

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What brings us here?

- An Expert Review Panel (ERP) performed a comprehensive program review of ELAP
 - Report released October 2015 - identified deficiencies and made recommendations for improving the program
- ELAP developed a work plan to implement recommendations
- Quarterly Webinars keep the Panel and community up-to-date
- We've had two so far—
 - February 8, 2016
 - June 7, 2016

Last Quarterly Update

June 7th Refresher

Our accomplishments since the release of the ERP report in October 2015:

- Reinitiated ELTAC
- Established the State Agency Partners Committee
- Implementing our internal management system
- Secured funding for an assessor training contract
- Hit communications milestones

Final quarterly update webinar

- The goal today is to present the progress we've made since June 7th
- We'll tell you our accomplishments
- Secondary goal – Empower you to participate
- We want feedback on how we are doing

Accomplishments

Accomplishments since June 7th

- Expanding resources
- Implementing our internal management system
- Supporting engaged advisory bodies
- **Making progress to adopt a new laboratory accreditation standard**

ELAP's Recommendation

- **Use the 2016 TNI Standard as the base for our laboratory accreditation standard management system requirement by incorporating the document by reference**
- Consider revisions to select elements that the laboratory community finds to have the worst cost-benefit
- Develop a compliance assistance program for laboratories to smooth the transition

State Water Board Workshop

October 6, 2016

- Board Members endorsed our recommendation
- Many members in laboratory community expressed concerns about the standard
 - The Board also endorsed our recommendation to work with the community to identify possible modifications to ease the burden of implementation
- Some speakers suggested we develop our own standard
 - Board Members rejected that idea

The Devil is in the Details

- While we are willing to consider modifications, we need to ensure what we remove, modify, or delay does not impact the value of the QMS to the State Agency Partners
- Our challenge is to find balance between concerns and value
- We have a process to get there

Process

- We've asked ELTAC to develop a list of recommended modifications
- State Agency Partners will review ELTAC's modifications and advise on whether they lessen the value of accreditation to their programs
- Our job is to find compromise when possible
 - ELAP will make the final decision

Timing

- ELTAC is meeting on November 2 to develop initial proposed modifications
 - Already working in subgroups
- State Agency Partners will meet to review
 - Will likely meet twice to review ELTAC's list
 - First meeting is November 7
- Additional meetings as necessary
 - ELTAC has a January 4, 2017 meeting
- Our hope is to reach conclusion by your
January 31-February 2, 2017 Panel meeting

Opportunity for Community Involvement

- We created a new email inbox to hear directly from stakeholders to hear suggestions on modifications
 - elapca_comments@waterboards.ca.gov
- ELTAC is the community's voice
 - ELTAC Members have email lists of their constituents
- The Panel meeting on January 31-February 2, 2017 is open to the public

Minimizing Costs

- Negotiated with TNI
 - Preferred rate for California ELAP laboratories for a limited time – member rate
 - We also arranged to provide free TNI templates
- We are committed to training and on-site assistance
- We are open to extended compliance date

What happens next?

- ELTAC meets this Wednesday, November 2
- State Agency Partners review in Nov/Dec 2017
- We present the results to ELTAC at January 4, 2017 meeting
- ELAP develops regulations
 - There will be many opportunities for stakeholder input on draft text
- California rulemaking process
 - Anticipate adoption in 2018

Accomplishments since June 7th

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Staffing Changes

- Hired a Proficiency Testing Unit Supervisor
 - Dr. Christopher Ryan
- Appointed a Quality Assurance Officer
 - Jacob Oaxaca
 - Implements ELAP's Quality Management System
- Interviewing to bring on 5 new staff
 - By end of year

Developing Existing Staff

- Increasing Technical and Assessment Knowledge
 - Ethics
 - Fraud
 - Radiochemistry
 - Shellfish methods
 - National Environmental Monitoring Conference sessions

Assessor Training Contract

- Will be released in next several weeks for bids
 - Mid-February start date is anticipated
- We think it will be the top assessor training program in the nation
 - Classroom and on-site training
 - Technical training on analytical methods
 - Training on assessment skills
 - On-Site Assessments
 - ELAP Staff shadow professional assessors, then switch roles
 - Will also serve as training tool for laboratories

Accomplishments since June 7th

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Internal Management System

- We created and are implementing 11 more Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- They establish expectations for consistent procedures
- We are holding staff accountable for conformance

Standard Operating Procedures

- Conducting On-Site Assessments
- Conducting On-Site Assessments for Cryptosporidium
- Off-Site Data Assessment
- Change in Ownership
- Document Control
- ELAP's Quality System
- Addressing non-conformities through preventative and corrective action in ELAP's internal management system
- Implementing ELAP's Strategic Communications Actions Plan
- Procedures Governing ELTAC
- Training new and existing On-Site Assessment staff
- ELAP Records Retention Policy

Tracking ELAP's Performance

- Beginning to assess the program's performance
 - Each SOP has a metric to evaluate success
- Management is shadowing on-site assessors
 - Asking laboratories for feedback
 - Addressing non-conformities

Shadowing Assessors

- To ensure compliance with On-Site Assessment SOP and Customer Service standards
- Developed an SOP for addressing non-conformance
 - In response to a complaint about the program providing sub-standard customer service during an on-site assessment
- We are holding staff accountable for their actions

Lean 6 Sigma Program

- This project will improve our processes and increase efficiency
- Many ELAP internal processes are relics
 - Slow
- Lean 6 Sigma uses data to analyze program processes
 - Goal is to increase efficiency
 - Eliminates non-valued added steps
 - Will assist staff in workload management
- Consistent with Water Board procedures and values

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ELTAC is Active

- Six meetings in 2016
 - By-Laws require only three
 - Positive, productive relationship now exists between ELAP and ELTAC
- Recommendations we have accepted
 - Agency and laboratory coordination process for new regulatory needs
 - New Field of Testing worksheets - certification by analyte
 - Technical Requirement for standard
 - PT Requirement for standard

In the works

- Laboratory Accreditation Standard
- Proficiency Testing scoring system
- New fee structure (beginning in January)

The State Agency Partners Committee is Engaged

- Six (possibly seven) meetings in 2016
- Instrumental in our decision to adopt TNI QMS
- Committed to working with ELTAC in the future

How you can get involved

- Submit comments/feedback directly to ELAP
 - elapca_comments@waterboards.ca.gov
- Please engage with your ELTAC representative
- Attend ELTAC meetings
 - November 2nd and January 4th
- Attend the next Expert Review Panel meeting
 - January 31st - February 2nd in Costa Mesa

**Thank You –
to the panel and
laboratory community
for your feedback**

Questions