

HASQARD Focus Group
Meeting Minutes
November 8, 2011

The meeting was called to order by Huei Meznarich, HASQARD Focus Group Chair at 2:04 PM on November 8, 2011 in Conference Room 126 at 2420 Stevens.

Those attending were: Huei Meznarich (Chair), Cliff Watkins (Secretary), Lynn Albin, Heather Anastos, Courtney Blanchard, Jeff Cheadle, Scot Fitzgerald, Jim Jewett, Shannan Johnson, Kris Kuhl-Klinger, Joan Kessner, Larry Markel, Karl Pool, Noe'l Smith-Jackson, Steve Smith, Chris Sutton, Cindy Taylor, Chris Thompson, Amanda Tuttle and Eric Wyse.

- I. Huei Meznarich requested comments on the minutes from the October 4, 2011 meeting. No HASQARD Focus Group members present stated any comments on the October meeting minutes and, after hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.

- II. The Action Tracking Matrix was discussed:
 - a. Chris Sutton reported that the language in the current de minimus language posted on the HASQARD web site relevant to application of custody seals to sample bottles is consistent with current practices. The action item was closed.

 - b. Huei Meznarich updated the Focus Group on the schedule of events related to producing Revision 4 of HASQARD. Huei also requested input from the chairpersons of the subcommittees for which she needed schedule information. The schedule will be revised and distributed at the next HASQARD meeting or by request as needed.

As part of this discussion, the Secretary asked the Focus Group whether there was a plan or need to revise Volume 3 of HASQARD. The Secretary acknowledged that the group has a significant way to go in producing Rev. 4 of Volumes 1, 2 and 4. The main interest of the Secretary was to determine if the current version of Volume 3 could be reissued as Rev. 4 with the rest of the Volumes or whether there was a need to revise it. Huei Meznarich asked who in the room was knowledgeable of Volume 3 and its use. Joan Kessner stated that WCH uses field measurements and conforms to HASQARD in doing them. Joan said she would have Dave St. John or one of the field personnel look at Volume 3 and determine if a revision is required.

- III. The Status of the review for Volume 2 was discussed. The Secretary reiterated the review schedule to close on November 18, 2011 and asked if

there were any known issues with that schedule. No Focus Group members stated an issue meeting the November 18 deadline for review comments.

IV. HASQARD Revision 4 Proposals

The Secretary projected the Word file containing the combined set of proposed revisions to Volume 4 of HASQARD as provided by the organic analysis, inorganic analysis, radiochemistry and quality assurance (QA) subcommittees on a screen for all to view. Input from the QA subcommittee was received after the file showing all other revisions had been distributed to the Focus Group for review in preparation for this meeting. The Secretary used the software and started by addressing only those revisions that had comments associated with them because they were either added by the QA group or were highlighted as revisions where equivalent wording had been proposed by two or more groups.

The QA group suggested adding language to Section 3.1 “Chain of Custody Definition” to address one of the DOE gray boxes in the QSAS. Specifically, the QA Group suggested a second sentence be added to the Section stating, “Chain of custody records establish an intact, continuous record of the physical possession, and the storage and disposal of sample containers, collected samples, sample aliquots, and sample extracts or digestates.” A lengthy discussion ensued that focused on the fact that “chain-of-custody” is not always as rigidly maintained in the form signatures documenting movements and transfers of sample extracts and digestates as it is for the movement and transfers of the original sample material from which those preparations are derived. After the discussion, the group decided to exclude the proposed sentence from the section in favor of the language that had always been in HASQARD.

Three different subcommittees had proposed language associated with the verification of sample preservation during sample receipt. The three proposed bullets that addressed the same concept were:

- Verify that the method specific guidance/requirements for preservation of the samples have been met. [proposed by the organic analysis subcommittee]
- Verify chemical preservation using readily available techniques, such as pH or chlorine, prior to or during sample preparation or analysis. [proposed by the inorganic analysis subcommittee]
- Verify if required field preservation (e.g., pH adjustment) has been performed on water samples (except for VOA samples) and preserve as necessary. Document unpreserved samples on the custody form, sample check-in documentation or in the laboratory’s non-conformance tracking

system. [proposed by the radiochemistry subcommittee]

After lengthy discussion on the pros and cons of each wording, the Focus group compromised to a bullet that says:

- Verify if required field preservation has been performed on water samples (except for VOA samples) using readily available techniques, such as pH. Document unpreserved samples on the custody form, sample check-in documentation or in the laboratory's non-conformance tracking system.

This will be reviewed again during the final review conducted for Volume 4. There are concerns that on-site laboratories, which only very rarely experience issues with inappropriately preserved samples, would not be able to implement this requirement as part of the sample receiving process. Retaining the language “or during sample preparation or analysis” would be more acceptable to laboratories with no safe pH measurement capability available during sample receipt.

A sub-bullet also associated with sample receipt was suggested by the QA subcommittee. It was associated with noting anomalies observed during sample receipt either on the custody form or on nonconformance documentation and stated:

- If shipping containers and/or individual sample containers are submitted with sample custody seals and any seals are missing, the sample custodian shall note this on the chain of custody

After discussion, the Focus Group compromised with a revision to language of the superior bullet and the sub-bullet as follows:

- Note anomalies either on the custody form or on sample receiving documentation.
 - If shipping containers and/or individual sample containers are submitted with sample custody seals and any seals are missing, the sample custodian shall note this on the sample receiving documentation.

The QA subcommittee proposed adding a final sentence to the first paragraph of Section 3.5 “Laboratory Internal Chain of Custody.” That sentence was accepted and will say: “Tracking records shall include, by direct entry or linkage to other records, the date and time of each transfer.”

As an action item from a previous Focus Group meeting, Rich Weiss had accepted the responsibility to research the subject of check weights used for

daily balance checks. As a result of his findings, Rich proposed language on this subject for consideration as an addition to Section 4.2, "Balances, Thermometers and Pipettes" in Volume 4 of HASQARD. Glen Clark read Rich's suggestions and provided alternative language. The two proposals were:

- 1) Check weight values shall be established and verified to at least the readability of the balance to which they will be assigned, preferably to 10% of the balance readability. Daily checks shall include checking at approximately 2/3 (67%) of the balance capacity and should also include verification of the expected use range.
- 2) Daily checks shall include verification by bracketing the expected use range and it is recommended that, where possible, the verification include checking at approximately 2/3 (67%) of the balance capacity.

The reason for this proposed change is that research has shown that balances tend to first show they are drifting out of calibration when the load cell is loaded to 66% capacity. For this reason, PNNL performs only a one point daily check at 66% full load to ensure the balance is maintaining stability. Most of the other laboratories used by Hanford Contractors verify balance stability daily by using multiple check weights to bracket the expected use range.

After discussion, the Focus Group determined that the compromise language should be:

Check weight values shall be established and verified to at least the readability of the balance to which they will be assigned, preferably to 10% of the balance readability. Daily checks shall include verification by bracketing the expected use range and it is recommended that, where possible, the verification include checking at approximately 2/3 (67%) of the balance capacity.

This language may prove problematic for PNNL and will need to be resolved before a consensus revision to Volume 4 can be agreed to.

At this point in the meeting, it was clear that starting a discussion on another proposed revision would cause the meeting to run well over its scheduled end time.

Hearing no additional new business and no objections to the proposal to adjourn, the meeting was adjourned at 3:52 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for December 13, 2011 at 2:00 PM in 2420 Stevens, Room 126.