

HASQARD Focus Group

Meeting Minutes

December 17, 2013

The meeting was called to order by Huei Meznarich, HASQARD Focus Group Chair at 2:09 PM on December 17, 2013 in Conference Room 308 at 2420 Stevens.

Those attending were: Huei Meznarich (Focus Group Chair), Cliff Watkins (Focus Group Secretary), Taffy Almeida, Joe Archuleta, Jeff Cheadle, Glen Clark, Robert Elkins, Scot Fitzgerald, Joan Kessner, Karl Pool, Chris Sutton, Amanda Tuttle, Rich Weiss and Eric Wyse.

- I. Huei Meznarich asked if there were any comments on the minutes from the November 19, 2013 meeting. No Focus Group members stated they had comments on the November meeting minutes and, after hearing a motion and second for approval, the minutes were approved.

A discussion of the latest efforts to complete Revision 4 of HASQARD was held:

- a. The first agenda item discussed was the proposed revision to the software QA section for Volume 1 that was drafted by Joe Archuleta. The Focus Group members present stated that they like the draft that Joe produced. Joe Archuleta and Chris Sutton stated that the language used invokes what they felt were applicable and appropriate requirements from NQA-1 and the Quality System for Analytical Services (QSAS). As the draft was being displayed and reviewed during the meeting, the following comments and suggestions were addressed:

The Focus Group members present discussed the Software Engineering and Design section. Opinions that this section seemed overly prescriptive for software commonly used in the laboratory were expressed. Other members pointed out that this section is for design of software. That is, if a laboratory writes code for a specific purpose that has nothing to do with off the shelf purchased software, then this section is applicable. The section is not applicable to greater than 99% of the software used by both on-site and commercial laboratories. With that stated, no revisions to the language in the Software Engineering and Design section were proposed.

The Focus Group members present felt that one paragraph found in the Computer Program Testing section discussing spreadsheets should be set aside as a subsection to the rest of the section. The Focus Group members present felt there was a value to emphasize that spreadsheets, while a computer program, have unique and less detailed requirements for testing. The documentation expectations for spreadsheet testing were discussed

and the conclusion was that the language in the suggested draft was acceptable.

The Focus Group members present agreed to drop bullets that listed examples of procedures applicable to operation of software and situations that may result in software maintenance being required. These lists were dropped in favor of language stating that operation and maintenance shall be conducted as described in approved procedures, instructions and/or software documentation.

The Focus Group discussed the fact that commercial off the shelf software needs to be specifically called out in two additional places in the proposed section. The Focus Group discussed that in the case of commercial off the shelf software (COTSS), the vendor doesn't always supply verification/validation documentation (i.e., this documentation is proprietary). Therefore, it would be appropriate for the laboratory or field sampling organization to self-perform the verification /validation activities for the functions that the software application(s) is to be used once the COTSS is received. The Focus Group suggested this be looked at and reworded as part of the COTSS changes within the section. Joe Archuleta accepted the action to insert the words in the introduction to the section and in the software acquisition sections as discussed.

- b. The language regarding the modification of methods was discussed. Rich Weiss provided new proposed language for the second paragraph in the Field and Laboratory Analyses section of Volume 1. The Focus Group members present discussed the language and agreed that paragraph should read:

“If not specifically defined in contractual or other requirement documents, or if the client specified method is inappropriate for the requested analysis, the client shall be informed as to the laboratory’s proposed method prior to use. Any procedure may require formal acceptance by (including but not limited to) the client, DOE or regulating body prior to initiation of analysis and/or before revisions of the procedure are implemented. Procedures may also require accreditation by an accrediting body (e.g., Washington Department of Ecology). It is the Client’s responsibility to inform the laboratory of any acceptance requirements and to coordinate the third party organization’s acceptance of the laboratory as necessary. When directed to receive accreditation, the laboratory is responsible for initiation and maintenance of the accreditation (as granted by the accrediting body) and shall inform the client of any changes to their accreditation status for the requested analyses. If not specifically defined by the client or if acceptance status is unclear, the client shall be contacted for acceptance before implementation of any new or revised analytical procedure.”

- c. Huei Meznarich presented the fact that the latest revision to EPA Method 6010 has method blank acceptance criteria that no longer correspond to those in HASQARD. Huei suggested that we take the opportunity of publishing Revision 4 to HASQARD to revise the HASQARD metals analysis method blank acceptance criteria to get them to correspond with EPA's criteria as was done when Revision 3 of HASQARD was published. The Focus Group looked at Table 6-2 in Volume 4 of HASQARD to evaluate this suggestion. Table 6-2 applies to all inorganic analyses and the Focus Group members present did not know if EPA's revised method blank criteria was applicable to all inorganic analyses (e.g., anion analyses by method 9056). Therefore, Huei Meznarich took the action to determine how Table 6-2 should be revised and provide that input to the Focus Group Secretary for incorporation in the working draft of Revision 4 to HASQARD Volume 4.
- d. The Focus Group members present discussed the need to revise the Glossary Appendix of Volume 1 and References Sections in all volumes. The Focus Group determine that the Technical Editor assigned to polish the document should review all terms in the Glossary and strike any that are no longer used in any of the Volumes. The Focus Group can then review the definitions cited for the terms remaining to determine their accuracy given the revisions that have been made to other sections of the document. The Technical Editor will also look for references called out in the text to ensure only those titles remain in the references sections of each Volume. If additional documents are deemed important, they can be moved to a bibliography section.
- e. The process for reviewing and commenting on the final draft of Revision 4 for each Volume was discussed. Chris Sutton suggested that just the voting members of the Focus Group should review the final draft and submit any comments they have. Rich Weiss agreed that each company's review should be coordinated by the voting member so that only one set of comments is returned from each company. However, the voting member can delegate the review of the document to as many individuals as that member cares to coordinate the submittal of comments from. This approach was agreed to by the Focus Group members present
- f. The need to revise Volume 3 was discussed. Chris Sutton stated that in prior meetings he had said that Volume 3 is rarely used and is acceptable in its current form. However, recent use of the document by technicians performing field measurements has indicated that Volume 3 is not up to date with current EPA guidance and/or methodology. Also, the document should be revised to be consistent with the changes that will be made to Volumes 1, 2 and 4. Chris Sutton accepted the action of obtaining an electronic copy of Revision 3 of Volume 3 from the Focus Group Secretary, drafting a revision and returning the draft for Focus Group

review and comment. Chris stated that he would try to have this draft revision out for review before the next Focus Group meeting in January.

- II. The Focus Group Chair asked if there was any new business. Rich Weiss requested that the new language the Focus Group approved for the definition of sample custody for Volume 1 at the November meeting be inserted as appropriate and applicable in Volume 4 also. All Focus Group members present concurred and the Secretary took the action to make the revisions as necessary in the working draft. .

The Focus Group Chair asked if there was any additional new business to discuss. Hearing no additional new business, the Chair suggested that the meeting be adjourned. Hearing no objections, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:40 PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 28, 2014 at 2:00 PM in 2420 Stevens, Room 308.