

QA Strategy Workgroup Conference Call Notes
Thursday 05/29/03

Attendees

Chris Hall	Don Gourley
Tom Parsons	Rayna Broadway
Donovan Rafferty	Michael Papp
Richard Heffern	Mark Shanis
Larry Taylor	Gordon Jones
Keith Duncan	Mustafa Mustafa
Shelley Eberly	Basil Coutant
Leonard Marine	John Glass
Jeff Wasson	Andy Johnson
Melinda Ronca-Battista	Michael Miguel
Chris McMillan	Susan Kilmer
Paul Sanborn	

There were a number of individuals who called in after the call got started. If I missed your name, please e-mail me and I'll add it to the attendee list. *Action items listed in bold italics*

New Orleans Meeting

We were happy to have those State/Tribal/Local ambient air monitoring organizations in attendance at the National QA Meeting in New Orleans April 14-18th. However we'd like to get as many participants to the meeting next year which will probably be around the same time frame. We'd like to get some suggestions for training session that would provide some necessary training and help to get more individuals to the meeting.

If you have some suggestions of training please send them to me.

Presentations for the ambient air monitoring sessions will be placed on the QA Strategy Workgroup Website on AMTIC (<http://www.epa.gov/ttn/amtic/qaqcrein.html>) by 6/6/03

Focus Groups Needed

We'll be pursuing a number of projects in parallel this summer such as:

- < CFR Changes
- < Protocol gas and standard reference material
- < PM_{2.5} bias issues
- < P & A Statistics

Activities in these areas were discussed on the call.

We could use some help and participation on these subjects and would like to propose using focus groups to address these subjects. This would allow for more meetings within the same period of time. Mike will schedule meetings for each of the subjects so that focus group participants as well as the full workgroup will be aware and can attend as time and interest allow.

If you are interested in working on any of these subjects, please send Mike Papp and e-mail.

CFR changes and schedule for completion

It appears that we will be shooting for a draft of CFR changes by September 2003. Mike will provide some revisions on the next section(s) and provide it to the workgroup for review.

Protocol Gas and Standard Reference Material

Protocol Gas -

The EPA National Environmental Research Laboratory divested of the protocol gas program around 1996. This program provided a simple check on the standards provided by gas vendors. Lately, a number of the gas vendors and users have been concerned about the quality of these standards. Over the last 6 months OAQPS has been working with the EPA Clean Air Markets Division to perform a blind audit of 14 national gas vendors. The audit did show an overall failure rate of 17% of the products (failure considered a value > 2% of the tag value). OAQPS is trying to develop a vendor funded testing program to help improve the quality of these standards.

Standard Reference Material (SRMs)-

Somewhat related to the topic above, we have been made aware that NIST is moving towards providing traceability for SRMs rather than developing SRMs themselves. What is of concern is how vendors certify their SRMs (frequency, acceptance limits) and whether the vendors feel it is cost effective to develop and certify these standards for our ambient air programs.

As an example, Mike Miguel has had trouble getting a Toxic SRM from NIST that contains 1,3-butadiene. In California, the two most important compounds are Benzene and 1,3-Butadiene. Due to stability issues, SRM 1804 has been made or agreed to be made without 1,3-butadiene. From what I understand, they will not be making future 1804 cylinders due to cost (approx \$1500 for small cylinder) and low demand. It is an ambient level cylinder (5ppb).

OAQPS would like to work with NIST to understand their commitment for developing SRMs and their requirements for traceability. We plan on developing a memo that describes the needs of the Ambient Air Monitoring Program for various SRMs. In order to get a handle on our requirements for SRMs OAQPS will develop a survey. The intent is using a "strength in numbers" strategy to make them aware of our needs. If we can work together on some of our most important SRMs maybe NIST will commit to meeting our needs, at least for our priority SRMs.

Please take some time to fill out the survey once it is distributed.

PM_{2.5} Bias- A new Look

Shelly Eberly provided a number of graphics displaying the PM_{2.5} bias for the years 2000- 2002. For the first three years of the PM_{2.5} program (99-01) we observed a trend towards a negative bias for the program that was more pronounced in the R&P Sequential FRM. The 2002 data, on a national level, show some indication that the trend is moving in a positive direction which looks like a good sign. However, looking at the data by various aggregation methods still show some interesting trends (e.g., by EPA region) . We will get a focus group together to further explore the data and see what analysis and tests that might help ferret out the bias issue.

Precision and Accuracy (P & A) Statistics

Basil Coutant (Battelle) has been asked to look at different options for providing P&A statistics for the ambient air program. A few issues related to the current statistics include that they are not related to DQOs, they can be influenced by low concentrations and in addition there may be ways of getting additional information like bias out of the same sample with a different statistic.

Basil produced 3 versions of P & A statistics and 4 cases based upon data sets in which the precision and bias and drift in the audit standard were “set”. The three versions of the statistics can be reviewed to see how well they coincide with the “set” values. One addition that we will include in the next version of the statistics are the current statistics in CFR.

During the call a question was asked “who are the clients for these statistics?” which is a great question and reflects what we should have in CFR. It could be proposed that the P & A statistics in CFR should be for the purpose of determining if the data quality objectives are being met. Therefore the CFR statistics could be simply those that generate a 3-year precision and bias statistic. However, State/Tribal/Local monitoring agencies need to use the data from quality control samples at lower levels of aggregation (single pairs or quarterly data) and would need the statistics to generate these data quality indicators. These statistics could be placed into the QA Handbook, rather than CFR.

Miscellaneous Issues



NPAP Through the Probe Audit System

The NPAP through the probe trailers have been delivered to Regions 5,6 and 7 . The system has been successfully operated in Region 5.