

Quality Assurance Advisory Group (QAAG)
NADP Technical Meeting
Sept. 21, 2004
12:00 noon
Citadel Hotel
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

Attendees: Marcus Stewart, Chris Lehmann, Natalie Latysh, Bob Brunette, Greg Wetherbee, Jane Rothert, David Gay, John Sherwell

Minutes from the April meeting in Pt. Reyes, CA approved

The QAAG has never had a scheduled time or place to meet. It was decided that in the future, the QAAG will meet the day before the NADP meeting, spring and fall, in the late afternoon. If the NADP meeting begins on Tues., the QAAG will meet on Monday afternoon around 3 pm. The Program Office will arrange a room to meet in.

The data quality objectives (DQOs) were the main focus of discussion. There was a conference call in August between David Gay, Chris Lehmann, Greg Wetherbee, and Jane Rothert. Progress is slow, however. A workshop had been scheduled for October, but with no draft and due to conflicts with QAAG members, the workshop has been postponed until next spring, probably February in Denver, CO.

Marcus Stewart of MACTEC agreed to conduct a conference call in mid-November (before Thanksgiving, preferably the week of Nov. 15) and walk the QAAG through the steps used to develop CASNET DQOs. He will highlight and explain what CASTNET did. There will be a second conference call in January, or before the spring workshop.

The NADP needs to establish DQOs in order to determine if there are problems in the laboratory and/or in the field operations. Interpolation between NADP data points is the standard usage of the data and can be a major source of errors. NADP needs to establish total uncertainty for the network and needs to put error bars on the data so the data users have a better feel for what the data means.

The US Geological Survey is the external quality assurance organization for NADP. Throughout the year, comparison samples are sent to seven participating laboratories throughout the US and Canada. The USGS would rank the participating labs according to how well they did in comparison with each other, which could make some labs "look" bad, when in fact all the labs were fairly uniform in quality. The USGS will eliminate the ranking system and change the control charts they use to better show how each lab is performing.