

Minutes
Quality Assurance Advisory Group
April 11, 2005
Savannah GA

Attendees: Jane Rotherth/PO, Eric Prestbo/HAL, Chris Lehmann/PO, David Gay/PO, Joel Frisch/USGS, Marcus Stewart/MACTEC

OLD BUSINESS:

Significant Figures w/NTN Data: discussion about use of 3 significant decimals by the USGS without that accuracy provided by the NTN data (only 2 decimals).

Minutes approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

Agenda Item 3: Response to July 2004 Quality System Review

Written by CL and Van Bowersox. There were four major points in the QSR that were answered.

1. One NADP QA plan rather than an individual NTN, MDN, and AIRMoN plans,
2. Updated QAPPs for individual networks,
3. Get the SOPs in order for all data processes,
4. T. Schertz suggests caution with NADP DQOs since it will add more conditions to NADP performance and still may not coincide with data user expectations.

Discussion followed of DQOs. Should NADP have them, and how should we handle them in we institute them. CL walked through the Response. Response seems fine to the group. A few suggestions were made (by JR, JF). **ACTION:** CL will make changes to document and present to Exec at the June meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: Group recommends that the Response document, as amended, be presented to the EC and that the EC accept as amended.

Agenda Item 4: Data Quality Objectives

Basic questions:

1. Does NADP need a minimum detectable trend, to determine exactly at what level a trend could be seen at a given alpha level (like CASTNET)?
Discussion ensued, lots of topics were covered here. No agreement on whether a DQO was necessary or wanted. No agreement on what it should be, or how it could be developed. **ACTION:** It was decided to draw upon the expertise of Luther Smith/MANTEC (a statistician) to help us figure this out, and to help us decide if it is necessary/needed and/or a doable objective.
2. Use of Minimum Reporting Limits?
Discussion about analytical detection limits vs. MRLs, given that detection generally gets better over time and the problems that this would present in

reporting (in particular, with new equipment and better detection). MDL would be a step-function over time. MRLs are a gray area. Discussion evolved to using the ½ MDL to date in NADP. It was a mixed reaction by the committee whether this was good and/or appropriate. **ACTION:** CL will investigate the differences in old data/map at ½ MDL vs. a 1 MDL map as the minimum.

3. Calibration of rain gages by operators?

Should the operators be recalibrating the rain gages if they fail to work properly, given that they have no training besides what they receive at the PO training course. Possible solution: sending out people to service the gages, possibly from the PO, USGS, NWS or some other person who is use to dealing with gages. Alternative: just send out PO people to service the worst gages only, through remote testing of the gages (perhaps like HAL does). JF says check our data first to determine how much of a problem this is and then work from there. No action items.

Agenda Item 5: CAL is changing their IC

Should the QUAG be part of this decision? Little discussion on this point.

Agenda Item 6: Site Sponsors and Responsibility

JF starts with a basic synopsis of this problem. The site sponsors (those paying for sites) are not being updated with information about what is going on with their sites. Sponsors need to see that their sites are complying with the audit team's findings. He realizes that the operator can only do so much, but why spend the \$2000 on audit if there is no action after the results are in. When an audit fails, someone needs to do something to correct the problem.

In addition, the committee is not keeping up the siting standards with new stations. Suggesting that the committee too easily accepts the variance requests. JF solution proposed: QA Manager and a few others make the decision rather than the entire NOS committee. EP Should the QAAG force the network to do better on the field problems?

MOTION: New sites do not come up to the NOS committee voting for variances to siting criteria, but goes to a small committee to tighten up the process. Small committee should be QA manager, NOS chair and vice-chair.

MOTION: More emphasis/money/focus should be on field QA and site auditing and remediation of failures, and to encourage site sponsors to eliminate correctable violations that are occurring at their sites (not parking lots, or roads, but trees, etc.). This emphasis should be in place of added QA emphasis on the laboratories.