



The TNI National Environmental Field Activities Program (TNI NEFAP)-Accreditation Procedure

PJLA offers third-party accreditation services to Conformity Assessment Bodies (i.e. Testing and/or Calibration Laboratories, Reference Material Producers, Field Sampling and Measurement Organizations and Inspection Bodies). This procedure outlines PJLA's accreditation process and criteria administered to conformity assessments bodies for **The NELAC Institute National Environmental Field Activities Program (TNI NEFAP)**. **Both procedures shall be followed for the entirety of this accreditation program.**



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1.0 Scope/Purpose

- 1.1 The NELAC Institute (TNI) National Environmental Field Activities Program (NEFAP) is an accreditation program designed to assess the competency and capability of Field Sampling and Measurement Organizations (FSMOs).
- 1.2 This procedure includes the process for which PJLA carries out its accreditations in accordance with the NEFAP. This also includes specific requirements of applicant and accredited (CABs) wishing to obtain and maintain an accreditation to the NEFAP. This appendix only includes NEFAP program specific requirements, which are not found in the body of this document. Criteria outlined in the body of this document will be carried out by PJLA and enforced by PJLA to its (CABs) as well as these requirements as necessary.

2.0 REFERENCES

- 2.1 Field Sampling and Measurement Organization Sector Volume 1 General Requirements for Field Sampling and Measurement Organizations (FMSO-V1-2014)
- 2.2 Field Sampling and Measurement Organization Sector Volume 2 General Requirements for Accreditation Bodies Accrediting Field Sampling and Measurement Organizations, (FSMO-V2-2014)
- 2.3 International Standard ISO/IEC 17011 Conformity assessment – General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies, September 2004

3.0 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **Accreditation:** A formal recognition that (CAB) is competent to perform field sampling and measurement. Competence will be based on successful performance in both proficiency testing program and systems audit (inclusive of an on-site assessment) by programs/organizations recognized by NEFAP.
- 3.2 **Assessor:** One who performs systematic evaluation of a (CAB) on behalf of an accreditation organization.
- 3.3 **Conformity Assessment Body (CAB):** A facility that is requesting accreditation.



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- 3.4 **Field:** Any location outside where work is performed outside the legal entity's facility (i.e. laboratory).
- 3.5 **Field Measurement:** The quantitative determination of physical, chemical, biological or radiological properties of a matrix by measurements made in the field.
- 3.6 **Field Sampling:** The process of obtaining a representative portion of an environmental matrix suitable for laboratory or field measurement or analysis.
- 3.7 **Finding:** An assessment conclusion referenced to an accreditation standard and supported by objective evidence that identifies compliance with and/or a deviation from an accreditation standard requirement.
- 3.8 **FSMO:** Field Sampling and Measurement Organization.
- 3.9 **Laboratory Accreditation Organization (accreditation organization):** An organization which seeks recognition from the TNI NEFAP as being capable of performing adequate assessments for FSMOs requesting accreditation for a specific scope of activities and in compliance with the NEFAP standards.
- 3.10 **Matrix:** The substance within which a measurement is made or from which a separate sample is collected. The matrix includes the physical, chemical, biological or radiological characteristics of the substance which may interfere with the measurement of some desired characteristic of the substance.
- 3.11 **Preservation:** Physical or chemical treatment of a sample to prevent the gain or loss of target analytes before analysis; filtration, refrigeration and addition of chemical reagents are examples of preservation techniques.
- 3.12 **Proficiency Testing (PT):** A means of evaluating an organization's performance under controlled conditions relative to a given set of criteria through analysis of unknown samples provided by a proficiency testing provider.
- 3.13 **Proficiency Testing Provider (PTP):** Any private party or government entity accredited by a TNI recognized PTPA that meets the stringent criteria to produce and distribute TNI samples, evaluate study result against published performance criteria, and reports the results to FSMOs, ABS, and its PTPA.
- 3.14 **Proficiency Testing Provider Accreditor (PTPA):** An organization with technical expertise, administrative capacity and financial resources sufficient to implement and operate a program of PTP evaluation and oversight that meets the responsibilities and requirements established by the TNI FSMO and TNI Standard.



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3.15 **Sampling:** See (ISO/IEC 17025; 2005(E), Clause 5.7.1, NOTE 1):

4.0 SUBSTANCE OF THE AGREEMENT

4.1 PJLA is recognized by the ILAC and APLAC MRAs as operating to ISO/IEC 17011.

5.0 MANUAL/ORGANIZATION

5.1 PJLA maintains a quality manual and operating procedures and work instructions to document its quality system to comply with ISO/IEC 17011. These and other related documents (including this one) state all of the requirements for organizations seeking accreditation under the NEFAP program. PJLA will follow its organization procedures as specified in these documents in the removal, suspension or withdrawal of an organization's accreditation status based on the organization's failure to meet requirements of the program on an ongoing basis or at the organization's request.

6.0 TRAINING AND QUALIFICATION

6.1 PJLA maintains a training, qualification and on-going continuing education program for assessors based on the requirements in the TNI document FSMO-V2-2014. New and experienced assessors are required to meet the requirements contained in this document. PJLA may, at its option, utilize the training of another accrediting organization. However, that accrediting organization must also be recognized under the TNI NEFAP. PJLA will also recognize appropriate training conducted by federal, state, or local entities, academic/educational institutions or qualified private organizations.

6.2 FSMO assessors will possess a Bachelor's degree (or higher) in a scientific/technical discipline or have equivalent experience in environmental sampling and measurement. To be qualified all assessors will have to participate in at least four on-site assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor. Initially, assessors in the beginning of the program will not have to be witnessed or supervised if they have completed at least four other FSMO on-site assessments and have been determined to be proficient by PJLA.

6.3 All assessors shall complete a basic training course that addresses the requirements of FSMO-V2-2014 and pass a written test. They shall also complete or have on record completion of at least one technical discipline involving sampling, measurement technologies, or a combination in areas such as: air matrices, solids (soils, sediment, sludge and soils monitoring), water



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(surface, waste, drinking and ground water), biological samples (ex: whole animals, fish, shell fish, plant or animal tissue, and micro-organisms). Annual refresher training will be provided to address (for example): regulations; accreditation processes and procedures and requirements; records and documents; data analysis, reduction and reporting; sampling and measurement methods and techniques; and other topics to improve assessment and communication skills.

6.4 All qualifications and training will be documented in the assessor files.

7.0 ASSESSMENTS AND DOCUMENTATION

7.1 PJLA will perform on-site assessments of organizations' quality systems to include their general ISO/IEC 17025 requirements, the FSMO-V1-2014, and the specifics of the TNI NEFAP program. These will, at minimum, meet the requirements of the then current FSMO-V1-2014. Each assessment will include the completion of a checklist that follows the example of that provided by the TNI NEFAP program or one that gives equivalent coverage of the example current to the requirements of the TNI NEFAP program. The checklist and other pertinent documentation will be kept for 5 years or otherwise instructed by the TNI NEFAP program (see 4.7 below).

8.0 PROFICIENCY TESTING (ACCREDITATION PROCESS)

8.1 PJLA requires all (CABS) applying or maintaining accreditation under the TNI NEFAP to participate in applicable and available proficiency testing (PT) programs from an approved PT provider to each scope of accreditation sought. This PT program must comply with PJLA Policy PL-1 and other related program specific requirements. If appropriate PT programs are not applicable or available then proficiency can be demonstrated by a variety of means such as (but not limited to): internal quality control check samples or programs; studies to establish method detection limits, precision, accuracy, and demonstrations of capability; internal self-monitoring and audits of the field sampling or measurement activities; or inter-organization studies.

9.0 ACCREDITATION INTERVAL/CYCLE (ASSESSMENT PROCESS)

9.1 PJLA currently accredits (CABs) for a two-year accreditation cycle, supplemented with yearly on-site surveillance assessments. While no change in this interval is anticipated, for the TNI NEFAP program, it will not exceed the times and conditions allowed in ISO 17011. Accreditation and re-accreditation assessments involve the off-site review of documentation and performance



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information and an on-site assessment that address all elements of ISO/IEC 17025 and the TNI NEFAP program.

10.0 ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS AND REPORT

10.1 PJLA will follow its documented procedures in the conduct of the assessments, documentation of findings (non-conformities/observations), and on-site reports. PJLA assessors will be expected to leave the documentation of findings and the report with the organization at the conclusion of the closing meeting. Also, the lead assessor is expected to send this documentation to PJLA HQ within 14 days from the end of the assessment (with allowances for travel, weekends, etc.). For the TNI NEFAP program, the assessed organization will have thirty (30) days to respond to the non-conformities with either the corrective actions for the non-conformities or a corrective action plan. An extension of this time frame may be agreed to in certain circumstances. PJLA will respond to this plan in a timely manner (less than 30 days). Consistent with current PJLA requirements all non-conformities must be closed or resolved with correction and containment, root cause, implementation of corrective action, and objective evidence or an assessable plan with objective evidence of implementation of the plan within 60 days of the closing meeting. All non-conformities must be so resolved prior to recommending accreditation.

11.0 RECORD RETENTION (RECORDS/COMPLAINTS)

11.1 PJLA currently retains records from three (3) to five (5) years (depending on the record), minimum. However, records for the TNI NEFAP program will be retained for at least five (5) years minimum. These records will include all complaints received from customers and others about (CABs) accredited by PJLA in the TNI NEFAP program. Specific program requirements may supersede these retention periods, but only by increasing them.

12.0 DELEGATION (SUBCONTRACTING OF ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES)

12.1 PJLA will not delegate (whole or in part) the responsibility of (CAB) assessment to another organization, which is not itself recognized under the TNI NEFAP. This will not extend to the assessors themselves, many/most of who are independent contractors. PJLA confidentiality and conflict of interest policies will be enforced.



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13.0 SUBCONTRACTING OF (CAB) ACTIVITIES

13.1 (CABs) accredited by PJLA under the TNI NEFAP program will not subcontract activities described under the scopes of their accreditation and for which they are recognized unless the subcontracted organization is also recognized under the TNI NEFAP program for the same activities. Other provisions of ISO/IEC 17025 regarding subcontracting will, of course, also be enforced.

14.0 PARTICIPATION AND MAINTENANCE OF RECOGNITION

14.1 PJLA will participate in meetings with the TNI NEFAP as scheduled and announced, to help in the evaluation, maintenance and improvement of the TNI NEFAP. PJLA will undergo periodic re-evaluation as an AB by the TNI NEFAP program as required.