

Regional Toxicology Liaison – Quarterly Reflection and Progress Report

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Quarter reported: October - December, 2023

Testimony training continued in the final quarter of 2023. The table below summarizes the year, including training in the last quarter and upcoming for 2024. Overall, the training was well received and incorporated the Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) State Coordinator or designee, a Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor (TSRP) or designee, and an individual from the judiciary such as a Judicial Outreach Liaison (JOL). Due to scheduling conflicts, a few more trainings will be held in 2024 with continued funding support from Responsibility.org.

2023 RTL Testimony Training and upcoming events

Training Date	Training Location	# of Attendees	# of Labs Present	States in Attendance
June 16, 2023	Akeny, IA	13 toxicologists, 2 DREs	2	Iowa and Nebraska
June 28, 2023	Columbus, OH	34 toxicologists	11	Ohio
July 19-20, 2023	Los Angeles, CA	75 toxicologists	24	California, Arizona, Nevada, Canada
July 27, 2023	Jefferson City, MO	26 toxicologists	4	Missouri, Illinois
September 7, 2023	Topeka, KS	16 toxicologists	4	Kansas
September 18, 2023	Little Rock, AR	9 toxicologists	2	Arkansas
September 26, 2023	Waukegan, IL	17 toxicologists	4	Illinois, Wisconsin
November, 15, 2023	Madison, WI	44 toxicologists	5	Wisconsin
TBD	Northern, California (venue TBD)	Future training		
TBD	Arizona	Future training		
TBD	Minnesota	Future training		
TBD	Michigan	Future training		

During Q4, the RTLs continued to meet with various state's SHSOs and highway safety partners for recurring meetings. In addition, the RTLs for R7 and R5 attended and presented at the annual SOFT conference. The focus of the presentation was to report out the work of the SOFT Toxicology Resource Committee (TRC), providing feedback from laboratories across the country. Over 150 laboratories were queried, and we received 96 responses from separate laboratories. Thirty-seven percent of laboratories test blood specimens while 37% test either urine only or a combination of blood and urine. Forty-seven percent of laboratories continue to utilize a stop testing workflow, meaning when the blood alcohol concentration (BAC) and/or illicit substance is detected at a certain concentration, comprehensive drug testing is not performed. The reasons for stop testing varied among the laboratories, some are in place due to workload, and others are directed by policy or statute. The RTLs will continue to work with the

laboratories in their regions to understand why stop testing occurs and find ways to provide support and resources. There have been requests to publish the outcomes from this work, and the RTLs will work with the TRC to write a publication that will be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal.

Project challenges:

The requests for assistance from non-represented regions continue to occur. The RTLs and the Project Manager (PM) work to provide guidance to the extent they are able. In most instances, the PM will provide consultation and resources. There have been several requests for testimony training in states that are outside of the current represented regions. The PM is keeping track of these requests, however, the states with regions 5, 7 and 9 will be given priority. One laboratory offered to cover all costs associated with the training and this will be considered as the remaining trainings are scheduled. Responsibility.org has agreed to continue to fund the trainings in the represented regions. Without the financial support from Responsibility.org, the testimony trainings would not be possible.

Not all laboratories have implemented the ASB documents. This will be addressed in the quarterly regional webinars as the RTLs will work to identify which ASB documents laboratories are struggling to implement and look for support and resources to assist. Standardization of laboratory testing is important as the RTLs begin exploring data harmonization in the coming years.

As always, the Buy America Act continues to hamper efforts to procure much-needed testing instrumentation using highway safety funding. The DUID Toolkit and related funding provided by NHTSA was very useful, but further funding and unique ways to circumvent the BAA are required.

Future goals:

Standardization is the primary goal for the RTLs in 2024. To compare data within and between states, the laboratories must achieve the same testing standards. The RTLs will gather feedback from each region's laboratories on whether or not they have implemented any ASB documents. Webinars targeting each of the standards and the process for implementation will be provided throughout 2024 in collaboration with the SOFT Continuing Education Committee.

In March the RTLs are leading a three-day webinar series focusing on method development and standardization. Each day will be about 4 hours of content and will feature presenters from different laboratories who will speak on their experience with different instrumentation. The last 2 days will include vendor-specific breakout rooms so attendees can ask questions relevant to the instruments in their laboratories.

Testimony training will continue on an ongoing basis. Some laboratories have asked for additional training and others have not been able to schedule the training due to various time constraints. The RTLs will ensure that the remaining laboratories in their regions receive the training.

Data harmonization continues to be a need. However, standardization must occur first. Throughout 2024, the RTLs will look to highway safety partners to understand the gaps in data and assist where necessary to build resources.

See Appendix for full list of activities and financial report

Appendix

RTL Activities Q4, 2023

R5 Q4 Activities:

Recurring:

RTL weekly meetings – Wednesday each week.

Minnesota DWI Taskforce–Monthly

Minnesota Office of Traffic Safety Staff Meeting – Monthly

Illinois Impaired Driving Task Force Meeting – Monthly

Wisconsin Impaired Driving Work Group - No set time or date

National Safety Council – Alcohol Drug and Impairment Division – Model DUI Law meeting - No set time or date.

National Safety Council – Alcohol Drug and Impairment Division – Cannabis in Safety Sensitive Positions – Meet every two weeks

National Safety Council – Alcohol Drug and Impairment Division – Cannabis Section – Monthly

National Safety Council – Alcohol Drug and Impairment Division –Position Statement on Adoption of Consensus-Based Standards and Laboratory Accreditation- No set time or date.

Academy Standards Board – Toxicology Consensus Body and Leadership Meetings – Monthly

Organizational Scientific Area Committees (OSAC)/Academy Standards Board Leadership Meetings – Monthly

Academy Standards Board – Toxicology Consensus Body Working Group Technical Report Terms and Definitions- No set time or date.

Academy Standards Board – Toxicology Consensus Body Working Group BPR 037-Guidelines for Opinions and Testimony in Forensic Toxicology- No set time or date.

Forensic Science Oversight Board Meeting (MA) – Monthly

RecoveryOhio Drug Trends Meeting - Monthly

Past Single event:

National Judicial College 2023 Indiana City & Town Judges Conference– Indianapolis, IN October 12-13, 2023

New England Forensic Drug Chemists Annual Meeting- Concord, NH October 24, 2023

NSC ADID Meeting – Virtual, October 29, 2023

Society of Forensic Toxicologists annual meeting (Presenter) – Denver, CO, October 29-November 3, 2023

Northeastern Association of Forensic Scientists Annual Meeting (Session Chair and Presenter) – Mystic, CT, November 8-10, 2023

Wisconsin Testimony Training – Madison, WI, November 15, 2023

Upcoming Activities:

Academy Standards Board – Toxicology Consensus Body Working Group 173 Standard for Education and Training of Forensic Toxicology Personnel –Weekly Meetings

RTL Q1 Quarterly Meeting-Virtual, January 16, 2024

Region 5 JOL/TSRP Meeting - Presenting on Marijuana-Virtual, January 22, 2024

RTL Method Validation Training – Virtual, March 26-28, 2024

R7 Q4 Activities:

Recurring:

RTL weekly meetings – Wednesday each week.

R7 Monthly State conference call – Last Tuesday each month

National Safety Council – Alcohol Drug and Impairment Division - Executive Board – Secretary, member of Administrative Committee.

Society of Forensic Toxicologists – monthly Board of Directors Meetings (Secretary)

Additional SOFT Activities include – Chair of Membership Committee, Chair of Policies and Procedures Committee, Member of the Finance Committee, Member of the Toxicology Resource Committee, Co-Editor of ToxTalk

OSAC Toxicology Subcommittee Monthly meetings

Additional OSAC work includes participation on the Alcohol Standard Methods subcommittee.

AAFS Academy Standards Board – Working on committee updating document ASB 017 Measurement Traceability, Working on committee publishing document ASB 122 Alcohol Calculations.

Midwest Toxicology Collaborative – Round Table – monthly meetings

Past Single event:

Presenter Southwester Association of Forensic Scientists – Houston, Texas, October 2, 2023

2023 Annual DWI Workgroup Meeting (TIRF) – Minneapolis, MN, October 23-25, 2023

National Safety Council Alcohol, Drugs, and Impairment Division Annual Meeting – Denver, CO, October 29, 2023

Society of Forensic Toxicologists Annual Meeting (Presenter) – Denver, CO, October 30-Nov 3, 2023

Presenter – SOFT TRC Survey Results

Wisconsin Testimony Training – November 15, 2023

Missouri Impaired Driving Subcommittee Meeting – November 17, 2023

Assessing Impaired Driving Trends Using Comprehensive Testing and a Multistate Approach – Speaker, The Center for Forensic Science Research & Education Webinar, December 6, 2023

Upcoming Activities:

American Academy of Forensic Sciences Annual Meeting – Denver, CO, February 17-23, 2024

Session Moderator – Friday February 23, 2024

National Safety Council Alcohol, Drugs, and Impairment Division Full Division Annual Meeting – Denver, CO, February 18, 2024

Nebraska Traffic Safety Conference – February 26-29, 2024

R9 Q4 Activities

Recurring:

Weekly RTL Meetings

Monthly Meetings with NHTSA R9

Various emails with lab staff within R9

Various email communication with the RTL Group

Document preparations for RTL Group

CA Impaired Driving Task Force April and Nov 8th - These are intermittent.

October

6th - MN Toxicology Presentation

10th – NADs Workshop brainstorm meeting

13th – Met with Debora from MIT to go over the tox presentation from the SOT MN Meeting

National Safety Council Alcohol, Drugs, and Impairment Division Annual Meeting – Denver, CO, October 29, 2023

November

15th – WI Testimony Training

16th – Meeting with Retired Chief Helena Williams (CHP)

16th - Meeting with Chief Kevin Davis CHP

20th - PPT prep for CAT and submission

21st - Coordinated meetings between Chris H and CA DOJ

30th – TRC Meeting

30th – Meeting with Chief Kevin Davis (CHP)

Coordinated meetings between Chris H and CA DOJ

December

3-5 CAT Meeting – Presentation on Dec 4th

OTS-NHTSA in-Person holiday parties

20th – Meeting with Chris H regarding CA DOJ

Communications with speakers for Method Development and Validation Training

Upcoming Activities:

RTL Quarterly Meeting – Jan

Method Development Validation Training – March 2024

Lifesavers – TSRP/JOL/LE – Meeting – April 2024

IACT Meeting – April 2024

NorCal Testimony Training – Spring 2024

CAT Spring Meeting May 2024

MAFS / NADS Conference May 2024

SFME Testimony Training – May 2024

SoCal Testimony Training – Fall 2024

SOFT Meeting Oct 2024

CAT Meeting – SoCal Testimony Training – December 2024