

Regional Toxicology Liaison – Quarterly Reflection and Progress Report

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Quarter reported: April - June, 2024

In April, the RTLs had the opportunity to attend and present during the annual Lifesavers conference. Before the conference, the RTLs were invited to participate in a meeting of the JOLs, TSRPs, and LELs. This was an incredible opportunity for the RTLs to introduce the program to other highway safety partners and learn from others the role they play in impaired driving prevention. Lifesavers is not a typical meeting for toxicologists to attend. However, the consensus after the conference was for the RTLs to promote the meeting to laboratories and see if highway safety offices will provide travel assistance.

AllRise has requested the RTLs' assistance in updating their best practices manual, specifically the testing portion. In addition, Burke (R9 RTL) attended a portion of the annual AllRise conference held in California. This allowed the RTLs to learn more about AllRise and understand how the two groups can successfully collaborate in the future. At the end of June, the RTLs attended a train the trainer with AllRise and found this to be beneficial. There are several areas the RTLs will be able to assist and collaborate with AllRise. The RTLs will be meeting regularly with AllRise to begin reviewing the best practices document and discuss other opportunities.

Testimony training began in the second quarter of the year. Minnesota kicked things off, and we will continue through the rest of the year with training in Oregon, Arizona, and California.

Upcoming events

The RTLs will hold an all-region quarterly meeting in July. The focus of the meeting will be case reviews from labs in each of the three regions. The SCOTUS decision on Smith vs. Arizona is beginning to negatively impact laboratories, and the RTLs are planning to address this during the fall with a webinar for the three regions' labs, TSRPs, and JOLs.

Heartsill (R7 RTL) is scheduling toxicology partner meetings for each of the states in the region. The meetings will include law enforcement, prosecution/defense attorneys, judges, SHSOs, and toxicology laboratories. The meetings aim to gather the highway safety partners and discuss current successes, challenges, and opportunities for collaboration and change. A report will be produced from each meeting, and the RTLs will monitor the progress of the deliverables based on the outcome of the meetings.

The National Alliance to Stop Impaired Driving (NASID) is planning a conference for November of this year. The RTLs are organizing a session for the conference and planning is underway.

Project challenges:

The RTLs continue to be extremely busy. Increasing requests for meeting attendance and presentations is rising and it's been difficult to fit them all into the schedules.

Oregon is not in the current represented regions but has asked for testimony training by July as they have transitioned from testing urine as the primary matrix to blood. Along with this change brings the need to provide training to the toxicologists to understand the differences in interpretation between blood and urine. The RTLs will fulfill this request.

There is some concern that the RTLs do not have the capability to serve their current regions and the addition of more regions into their positions will be a struggle. If this occurs, the program will continue to assess the needs and determine if one RTL is needed for each region.

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 will continue to be a goal for the RTLs. Recently, a standard (ASB 122) was released that focuses on the use of retrograde extrapolation to estimate blood alcohol concentrations. We will discuss ASB 122 in each of the testimony training sessions.

The laboratories have greatly appreciated the RTLs' meeting with them in person. Throughout the year, more laboratory visits and meetings are planned for each region. In addition to the laboratory visits, the RTLs are becoming more involved in state highway safety conferences, impaired driving working groups, and other conferences and committees.

The goals for 2025 have not been established. The PM will begin planning when decisions are made regarding the program's future direction.

See Appendix for full list of activities and a financial report

Appendix

RTL Activities Q2, 2024

R5 Q2 (April – June), 2024 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

Illinois Forensic Science Commission – Monthly

Illinois Forensic Science Commission Public Policy Subcommittee – Monthly

Wisconsin Impaired Driving Work Group – Quarterly

Michigan Governor’s Traffic Safety Advisory Commission – Quarterly

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 – 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.

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

Forensic Science Oversight Board Meeting (MA) – Monthly

RecoveryOhio Drug Trends Meeting – Monthly

2024 Midwest Traffic Safety Conference Planning Meetings– Monthly

Midwest Toxicology Collaborative Meetings– Quarterly

Past Single event:

Current Trends in Forensic Toxicology Symposium (Chair of Scientific Sessions)–Virtual, May 20-24, 2024

Michigan State Police OHSP Impaired Driving Program Meeting–Virtual, April 3, 2024

Society of Forensic Toxicology, Open Committee Meeting–Virtual, April 3, 2024

Midwest Association of Toxicology and Therapeutic Drug Monitoring–Chicago, IL, April 4-5, 2024

NHTSA Joint Meeting TSRPs/JOLs/LELs LifeSavers – Denver, Colorado, April 6, 2024

LifeSavers “Expanded Thinking Inside & Outside the Tox Box” – Denver, Colorado, April 8, 2024

Indiana Spring Judicial College “Cosmic Caution: Impaired Driving Program-Part One Toxicology” – Indianapolis, Indiana, April 8, 2024

Northeastern Area Toxicology Meeting – Maynard, MA, May 6, 2024

NHTSA Regional Toxicology Liaison Program, 2024 National TSRP Conference – Grand Rapids, MI, May 9, 2024

Stop Testing Practices in R5 (Request from Martin Boyes), May 15, 2024

Region 5 JOL/TSRP/LEL Quarterly Meeting Presentation "Tox Testing: Location of Sample Collection" – Virtual, May 20, 2024

National Safety Council Impairment Advisory Board Spring Meeting – Virtual, May 29, 2024

Minnesota RTL Testimony Training – St. Paul, MN June 12-13, 2024

Illinois Forensic Science Commission Meeting – Virtual, June 18, 2024

AllRise Train the Trainer– Alexandria, VA, June 24-25, 2024

Upcoming Activities:

Oregon RTL Testimony Training – July 11-12, 2024

Michigan Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan Toxicology for Prosecutors Training: "ANSI ASB 037: Guidelines for Opinions and Testimony in Forensic Toxicology or Why can't we say that?" and "Toxicology in Impaired Driving Cases" Presentations –Mt. Pleasant, MI, July 17, 2024

Missouri Law Enforcement Traffic Safety Advisory Council (LETSAC) Conference –Columbia, MO, July 23-24, 2024

RTL Quarterly Meeting – Virtual, July 30, 2024

R7 Q2 (April – June), 2024 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

Additional SOFT Activities include – Current President Elect, Member of the Finance Committee, Member of the Toxicology Resource Committee, Co-Editor of ToxTalk, mentor in SOFT Mentoring Program, monthly meetings for 2024 Annual meeting in St. Louis.

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

NASID Conference Planning Committee – scheduled meetings to plan 2024 meeting.

Past Single event:

Planning and Coordination meeting for continued Testimony Training Curriculum – ongoing with RTL Meetings to include Minnesota, Arizona, Oregon, California Department of Justice, and Montana.

OSAC Toxicology Subcommittee Annual in-person meeting – Indianapolis, IA, April 1-5, 2024

TSRP, JOL, LEL, RTL Meeting – Denver CO, April 6, 2024

Lifesavers Conference – Denver, CO, April 7-9, 2024

International Association of Chemical Testing Conference – Presenter, La Jolla, CA, April 22-26, 2024

NHTSA Region 7 Partners Meeting – Presenter, Des Moines, IA, May 13-15, 2024
SOFT Executive Committee in-person Meeting – Scottsdale, AZ, June 16-19, 2024
AllRise, Train the Trainer in-person Meeting – Alexandria, VA, June 24-26, 2024

Upcoming Activities:

RTL Quarterly Meeting – July 30, 2024
Oregon State Police Testimony Training – July 11-12, 2024
California Department of Justice Alcohol and Testimony Training – August 20, 2024
Arizona Testimony Training – August 26-27, 2024

R9 Q2 (April – June), 2024 Activities:

General

Weekly RTL meetings
One monthly NHTSA R9 Meeting

April

2nd – NASID Planning Meeting
3rd - Laboratory Meetings: SDME, Hawaii,
4th – Laboratory Meetings: Phoenix PD
5th – 9th – Lifesavers Meeting
10th-11th – NHTSA R9 Partners Meeting
18th – ADID – ADID Resource Advocacy meeting
19th - Laboratory Meetings:LAPD
Calls/emails with Mesa PD on testimony training planning
19th – Meeting with George Chwe – AZ LE/Prosecutors Summit

May

2nd – OSP Testimony Prep Meeting
16th- CA OTS IDTF Meeting
22nd – 26th – All-Rise Conference
24th - Focus Group-Cannabis Rescheduling-PIRE/AAAFST
29th – NASID Planning Meeting

June

4th – Meeting with Sara OSP – Testimony Training Planning
6th – AAFS-SOFT Meeting
10th-12th – CA OTS LE Summit
12th – MN Testimony Training online
18th – Meeting with Raymond – Mesa PD – Testimony Training Planning
19th – Phone meeting with George Chwe – AZ Testimony training and LE Summit
20th – Meeting with Alaska – speaker for Alaska State Traffic Safety Summit
24th- 26th – All-Rise – Train the Trainer