

Report on Metrology Laboratory

Presented by: Alan Moch
Testing and Safety Division Director
Public Service Commission

Before: Budget Section of the Legislative Council
Honorable Ray Holmberg, Chairman

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TESTIMONY

The Testing and Safety Division of the North Dakota Public Service Commission has inspection and/or testing responsibility over the State's Gas Pipeline Safety Program, the Metrology Program, and the Weights and Measures Inspection and Testing Program.

The following is a brief update on the facility use agreement between Facility Management and the Public Service Commission, and on the metrology program funding in Section 11 of Senate Bill No. 2007:

The Legislature appropriated \$74,600 for renovation of the Commission's metrology laboratory in order to mitigate certain non-compliances set forth by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (the laboratory's accrediting body).

Commission staff has been in contact with Facility Management staff and obtained advance approval for all renovations to the Metrology Lab currently ongoing as well as those completed to date. Commission staff will stay in contact with Facility Management staff and obtain approval for any future renovations.

In addition, a meeting was held in April 2008 between the State Metrologist, Testing & Safety Division Director, and Facility Management Grounds Supervisor to discuss joint use of the division's truck bay/metrology staging area by both parties. One of the noncompliance issues listed by NIST during their onsite audit of the metrology facilities was that space should not be shared for reasons of cleanliness and security. The system currently in place requires three days advanced notice from the State Metrologist to Grounds Maintenance to remove their equipment during scheduled metrology work; the area is then cleaned by either Grounds Maintenance or Testing & Safety staff; and the door between the two facilities is kept locked while standards are stored in the bay. All parties attending the meeting agreed that this is the most we can do to mitigate that noncompliance and that this system should be continued into the foreseeable future. During that meeting, staff thought that no formal joint use agreement would be needed.

In June 2008, the Commission received a proposed joint use agreement from the Director of Facility Management. One meeting was held on June 16th on that proposed joint use agreement. Additional meetings will be scheduled as necessary to work out an agreement which will allow the Commission to maintain NIST recognition during this biennium.

To date, the Commission has spent \$18,757 on renovations, with more renovations planned for the remainder of the biennium (please see the Metrology Laboratory Improvement List, attached). Commission staff and Facility Management staff are currently working to transfer remote operations of existing small mass laboratory and office facility HVAC systems from Facility Management to the State Metrologist at the laboratory facility. Installation of wall-mounted, computer interfaced environmental monitoring systems is nearly complete. The State Metrologist will then do an environmental control study (temperature and humidity) over the next nine months to determine what type of new HVAC system will be needed for the large mass lab. Of the appropriated \$74,600, we will set aside \$30,000 to purchase this new HVAC system in the late spring of 2009.

An additional \$7,000 is being set aside to pay for re-certification of the State metrology standards (standards the State Metrologist uses to calibrate working standards used by weights and measures inspectors). Current administrative rules require the Commission to re-certify these standards once every ten years.

The Legislature appropriated an additional \$20,000 for the purchase of a new metrology laboratory balance. The Commission purchased a new balance for \$13,500, leaving a \$6,500 balance in that line item which will not be expended by the Testing and Safety Division.

The Commission has been working this biennium to maintain NIST conditional recognition of the state metrology lab. In order to continue to maintain our conditional recognition this biennium, we must make forward progress mitigating NIST non-compliances. The Commission understands that the Legislature will need to make decisions in the next legislative session about long term future plans for the state metrology lab, which could include not providing metrology lab services in North Dakota and instead having these services provided by the Minnesota Metrology Lab.

This concludes my presentation. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Metrology Laboratory Improvement List as of June 18, 2008

Quantity	Item	Vendor	Price	Shipping	Total	Code	Remarks
1	Misc. Items and Supplies	Walmart	\$98.95		\$98.95	2008LAB	Miscellaneous lab supplies
2	Cleanroom ESD chairs	All-Spec.com	\$404.94	\$58.36	\$868.24	2008LAB	Conductive clean room chairs for small mass lab
1	Humidifier	Wal-Mart	\$69.96		\$69.96	2008LAB	For Environmental control of large mass lab
1	3-cleanroom table mats	allspec.com	\$339.32	\$19.57	\$358.89	2008LAB	Static free cleanroom table mats
1	Cleanroom weight case	Rice Lake	\$336.00	\$60.00	\$396.00	2008LAB	Case to house lab standards
1	6-Cartons of cleanroom ceiling tile, and misc lab supplies	Innotech Products Inc.	\$1,368.00	\$331.95	\$1,699.95	2008LAB	Replaced non-clean room ceiling tile in the small mass lab
8	Quart of epoxy edge seal	Innotech Products Inc.	\$25.00				Edge seal for new ceiling tile
	Oak shelf liners	Roughrider Hardwoods	\$21.15		\$169.20	2008LAB	Replaced non-clean room fabric liner
1	ESD table, cart, laptop stations	Globalindustrial.com	\$818.95	\$279.48	\$1,098.43	2008LAB	Mobile laptop stations for use in all metrological areas, 2 shelf carts for small weights movement,
1	Balance table	Mettler Toledo	\$1,650.00		\$1,650.00	2008LAB	anti static table for small mass lab Table is for the new Mettler XP64003L mass comparator
1	Freestyle ESD floor tile installation	House of Color	\$7,747.00		\$7,747.00	2008LAB	New conductive floating floor tile installed in small mass lab
1	HVAC controller	Energy Tech	\$4,600.00		\$4,600.00	2008LAB	To be used along with existing Facility Management software to read the Vaisala monitors and chart conditions monthly

Total Spent to date: \$18,756.62

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