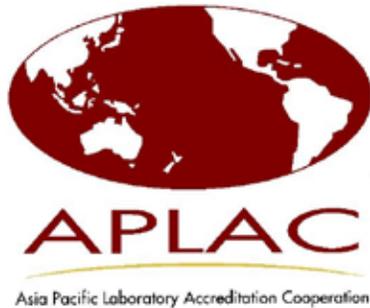


APLAC News Notes



APLAC is an organisation of accreditation bodies in the Asia Pacific area that have expressed a desire to cooperate in fostering the development of competent laboratories, inspection bodies and reference material producers in member economies.

Cooperation is to include:

- Exchange of information
- Joint training programs
- Proficiency testing
- Harmonisation of requirements
- Mutual recognition of systems meeting harmonised requirements

APLAC NEWS NOTES is published four times a year to facilitate the exchange of information among members and interested parties. It is not copyrighted and may be reproduced in full. Excerpts should reference APLAC News Notes specifically. Wide copying and distribution are encouraged.

APLAC also maintains a web site at: www.aplac.org

Secretariat for APLAC:

National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA)
Level 1, 675 Victoria Street
Abbotsford Vic 3067
Australia
Telephone: +61 3 9274 8200
Fax: +61 3 9421 0887
Email: aplac@nata.com.au

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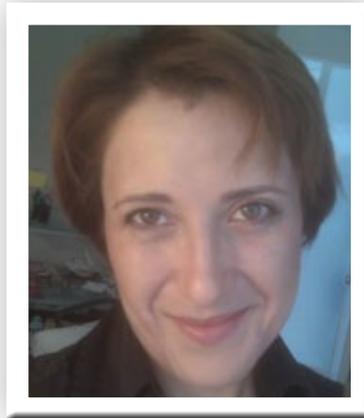


The American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA)

5301 Buckeystown Pike, Suite 350
Frederick, Maryland, U.S.A. 21704-8373

Phone: 1 (301) 644 3248
Fax: 1 (301) 662 2974
Internet: www.A2LA.org
Contact: Teresa C. Barnett, Quality Manager
Email: tbarnett@A2LA.org

Remembering **Bertha Munguia**



It is with great sadness that we report the death of Bertha Munguia at the age of 45. Her courageous four-year battle with cancer ended on 11 November.

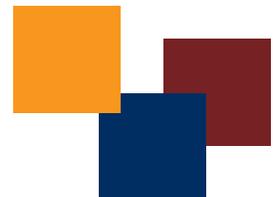
Bertha's last fourteen years in consulting included contributions to A2LA as well as to other accreditation and certification bodies of the Americas and the global accreditation community. Using her excellent bilingual skills, Bertha served not only as a superb life sciences laboratory assessor in both Spanish and English, but also as a management system auditor, a trainer, a peer evaluator of accreditation bodies, and a creator of guidance on the application of ISO conformity assessment standards including 17025, 17011, 9001, 14001, and 22000. She was a kind and generous person who often devoted energy and time to help people without recompense. Aside from suffering a huge loss of her professional talents, we will greatly miss her delightful smile and the joy and happiness she brought to those around her.

Before embarking on her consulting career, Bertha served two independent testing laboratories from 1987 to 1996, beginning as a technician in microbiological, chemical, and physical testing and instruments testing for food, drinking water, alcoholic beverages and feed, waste water, air, soils, cosmetics and bioassays. For both labs, she was in charge of the laboratory quality system including management of their accreditation. At the last laboratory, she served as technical director.

Her interest in laboratory accreditation was always evident since her attendance at ILAC-Hong Kong in 1994. Turning down lucrative offers to be a full-time employee, Bertha loved the freedom and wide ranging experiences being an A2LA assessor and independent consultant offered her.

She received her university degree in food technology engineering from the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, México, D.F.

She is survived by her two brothers, an aunt, cousin and several nephews and nieces. Donations may be made in her name to the Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation (14 Pennsylvania Plaza, Suite 1400, New York, New York, USA 10122) either online (www.ocrf.org) or by telephone (212 268 1002). ♦



Acceptance of Accreditation by United States Regulators

By Peter S. Unger, A2LA President & CEO

U.S. Regulatory Policy

In the U.S., conformity assessment activities are not centrally organized. They are a mix of regulatory and private sector market activities with the latter being predominant.

U.S. regulatory philosophy is to rely on manufacturers' declarations of conformity. There are several reasons for this in addition to minimizing the costs of conformity assessment. The U.S. legal system imposed severe penalties for introducing defective or hazardous products into the marketplace. U.S. consumers have broad access to information about many products. Dissatisfied customers can easily switch to a competing product. U.S. laws and regulations on truth in labeling and advertising protect consumers as well.

Executive Order 12866 – Regulatory Planning and Review states that agencies should:

- Promulgate only such regulations as are required;
- Analyzes all costs and benefits of available regulatory alternatives, including not regulating at all; and
- Select approaches that maximize net benefits wherever possible.

The choice of conformity assessment is determined in part by the assessment of risk. Agencies must conduct risk assessment of proposed new or revised regulations. Risk assessment comes down to regulators exercising judgment. Transparency and openness are important characteristics of the assessment process.

Conformity Assessment and Accreditation Guidance

Guidance on conformity assessment activities was issued by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in August 2000 as part of NIST's Congressionally-assigned function to "coordinate Federal, State, and local technical standards activities and conformity assessment activities with private sector technical standards activities and conformity assessment activities, with the goal of eliminating unnecessary duplication and complexity in the development and promulgation of conformity assessment requirements and measures" (15 U.S.C. 272, Chapter 7 (b)). The guidance outlines Federal agency responsibilities for evaluating their conformity assessment activities. Each agency is responsible for coordinating its conformity

assessment activities with those of other appropriate government programs and with those of the private sector to:

- Make more productive use of the increasingly limited Federal resources available for the conduct of conformity assessment activities including accreditation; and
- Reduce unnecessary duplication.

Types of Government Agency Programs

Historically, agencies have operated in-house laboratories and administered product certification programs. Within the last 30 years, agencies have set up accreditation programs for laboratories and product certification bodies. Within the last 15 years, more and more agencies are recognizing domestic accreditation bodies. And within the last few years there is increasing recognition of international multilateral mutual recognition arrangements (MRAs or MLAs) such as those of the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF).

The U.S. Congress has given Federal agencies overriding responsibility for most health and safety regulation. However, State and local governments regulate or enforce Federal regulatory mandates in areas such as:

- Buildings and construction;
- Agricultural products;
- Workplace safety;
- Environmental safety;
- Food service; and
- Nursing homes.

Sector-Specific Accreditation Programs

Government accreditation programs include environmental laboratories, clinical laboratories, food safety, animal health, drug abuse, product import testing, calibration, firearm and body armor, and information technology. Private sector accreditation programs run the gamut including automotive testing, EMC, building materials, environmental, clinical, forensic science, industrial hygiene, solar equipment, safety equipment and packaging to name a few.

There are also several State and local government programs. For example, California has accreditation requirements for bodies certifying crane operators and personal fitness trainers and bodies certifying plumbing products. Pennsylvania

(continued on page four)

also has accreditation requirements for bodies certifying crane operators. Florida has accreditation requirements for bodies certifying building products. New Mexico has accreditation requirements for bodies certifying electric fireplaces. The City of Boston has accreditation requirements for bodies certifying plumbing products. New York City has accreditation requirements for special inspection bodies.

Federal Agency Accreditation Programs

Health and Human Services (HHS). The Commission for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recognizes accreditation bodies in both the public (State government) and private sector (e.g., the College of American Pathologists, the Commission for Office Laboratory Accreditation, the Joint Commission for the Accreditation of Health Care Organizations). CMS neither uses ISO/IEC 17011 for accreditation body requirements nor ISO/IEC 17025 or ISO 15189 for clinical laboratories. Accreditation requirements are based upon the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act of 1988.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). ICE accredits laboratories and inspection bodies for several types of imported products. ICE does not follow ISO/IEC 17011 and its criteria are similar to, but not quite the same as, ISO/IEC 17025 or ISO/IEC 17020. ICE does not recognize any other accreditation bodies. However, several ICE laboratories are accredited by the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA).

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). One FHWA department recognizes ILAC MRA signatories for the accreditation of tests for highway crash mitigation equipment. Another FHWA department does not recognize the ILAC MRA and relies on the American Association for State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Accreditation Program (AAP) plus accreditation bodies recognized by the National Cooperation for Laboratory Accreditation (NACLA) which adopt the AAP assessment approach for highway construction materials testing laboratories.

Federal Communications Commission (FCC). FCC regulates the telecommunications and radio frequency spectrum. FCC recognizes certain accreditation bodies for both ISO/IEC Guide 65 product certification as well as ISO/IEC 17025. However, FCC does not recognize the ILAC MRA, but it will review bodies on a case-by-case basis. FCC is moving toward acceptance of supplier declaration of conformity underpinned by accredited test data. The FCC laboratories are not accredited.

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). FAA requires

accredited certification to AS 9100/AS9110/AS9120. The aerospace industry, through the International Aerospace Quality Group (IAQG) and Americas Aerospace Quality Group (AAQG), has succeeded in having FAA recognize accredited quality management system certification in place of direct supplier audits by OEMs, though OEMs still hold legal responsibility.

Department of Energy (DoE). For its superior energy performance programs, DoE cites accredited organizations for ISO 14065 verification bodies and ISO/IEC 17024 personnel certification. DoE also recognizes the National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP) for accreditation of laboratories testing energy efficient lighting.

Department of Justice (DoJ). The ANSI/ASQ National Accreditation Board (ANAB) accredits certification to BA9000, which is a body armor industry-specific standard based on ISO 9001 and recognized by DoJ. NVLAP accredits body armor testing laboratories whose data are used to support DoJ certification of body armor.

Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA provides accreditation of laboratories testing meat and dairy products with user fees to support product labeling but does not use the ISO standards directly. USDA relies heavily on proficiency testing programs. Some USDA laboratories are accredited by A2LA. USDA is also developing a process for recognition of test results on products for the school lunch program provided by laboratories accredited by the ILAC MRA signatories.

Coast Guard. The Coast Guard requires accreditation of independent laboratories providing test results on equipment requiring Coast Guard type approval. Accreditation must be provided by an ILAC MRA signatory or NACLA-recognized accreditation body.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA environmental lead (Pb) program recognizes and oversees the accreditations by A2LA and AIHA/LAP, LLC. ANAB offers accredited certification for responsible recycling (R2), a standard developed with involvement of EPA. ISO 14001 certification has some degree of support by the EPA which has determined that 14011-certified organization environmental management systems do better for EPA Performance Track so EPA focuses its audits on organizations whose systems are not certified. The EPA Water Sense Program recognizes the ILAC MRA and IAF MLA signatory accreditations. The EPA Energy Star Program recently established requirements for data provided by laboratories accredited by ILAC MRA signatories and IAF MLA for product certification bodies. The National Environmental

(continued on page five)

Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) Institute (TNI) recognizes State government agencies as the sole accreditation authorities. Private sector accreditation bodies are considered assessment bodies, not accreditation authorities. The TNI recognition criteria are based on ISO/IEC 17011 and 17025 with detailed applications. The ILAC MRA is not recognized. TNI, however, recognizes A2LA to accredit proficiency testing providers.

Department of Defense (DoD). DoD has an Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program for the testing conducted at environmental restoration sites. DoD recognizes U.S.-based ILAC MRA signatory accreditation for third-party laboratories. DoD has additional quality control/assurance requirements. In addition, DoD uses accredited ISO 17024 personnel certification bodies for its information security directive.

Department of Homeland Security (DHS). DHS recognizes ANAB as the sole accreditation body for the Private Sector Preparedness Voluntary Certification (PS-Prep) Program adopting ASIS SPC.1, BS 25999-2 and NFPA 1600.

National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST). NIST administers the National Voluntary Conformity Assessment Systems Evaluation (NVCASE) Program which supports government-to-government trade agreements and Federal agencies which desire a recognition scheme for accreditation bodies. NVCASE does not formally use the ILAC MRA and IAF MLA peer evaluation processes. NVCASE is evaluating the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service as an accreditation body for accrediting quality management system verification program certifiers. Under its USGv6 Test Program, NIST does recognize ILAC MRA signatories who collaborate with NIST to develop specific technical requirements (SP 500-273) in order to formalize their recognition by NIST. ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation of laboratories for conformance and interoperability testing of information technology hosts, routers and network protection devices.

Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). NRC regulates components for nuclear reactors. NRC recognizes certain ILAC MRA signatories in the U.S. for calibration laboratory accreditation. NRC wants to expand recognition to foreign ILAC MRA signatories, for both testing as well as calibration. But NRC first wants to gain confidence in the MRA peer evaluation process by observation of regional evaluations of accreditation bodies.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The FDA Office of Regulatory Affairs has published draft guidance, *Submission*

of Laboratory Packages by Accredited Laboratories, for biological products, drugs, devices and food. The guidance suggests accreditation by an ILAC MRA signatory using ISO/IEC 17025 plus the AOAC International *Guidelines for Laboratories Performing Microbiological and Chemical Analysis of Food and Pharmaceuticals*. Accreditation would allow private sector laboratories to submit abbreviated packages substantiating the testing performed for import documentation. All 12 FDA Office of Regulatory Affairs laboratories are accredited by A2LA

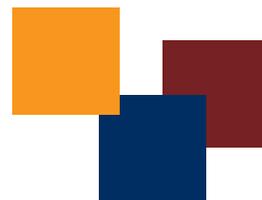
Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). CPSC is issuing several wide-ranging regulations to protect children under the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008. The first regulation addressed lead (Pb) in paint on children's toys -- then, it was mechanical properties of children's toys, etc. Other regulations are being established, all of which require testing be done by laboratories accredited by ILAC MRA signatories.

Benefits of Accepting ILAC MRA & IAF MLA Signatory Accreditations

The U.S. government is benefiting from the use of internationally recognized accreditation as it:

- Eliminates the expense of government-administered programs;
- Increases the confidence in results used to determine compliance with regulations;
- Eliminates duplication in conformity assessment by reliance on recognized accreditation bodies;
- Reduces costs of trade;
- Encourages conformity assessment at the sources of supply; and
- Upholds WTO Technical Barriers to Trade treaty commitments.

This author foresees even greater regulatory use of internationally recognized accreditation once awareness of these benefits is more fully realized by the U.S. Congress and the Executive Branch of the U.S. government. ◆



TAF-Taiwan

By Wanji Yang

TAF Hosts APLAC Training Course on ISO/IEC 17043:2010...

On 14-16 September 2010, the Taiwan Accreditation Foundation (TAF) hosted the APLAC Training Course on ISO/IEC 17043:2010 at its Taipei Office in Danshui. The training course was designed to help accreditation bodies understand the new International Standard ISO/IEC 17043:2010. The Working Group for this training course was composed of Ms. Zhang Mingxia, Mr. Dan Tholen, Dr. Robert Audette, Ms. Suda Nantavithya, Dr. Aparna Dhawan, Mr. Michael Fraser, Mr. Nigel Jou, Ms. Sylvia Lin and Mr. Jason Stine.



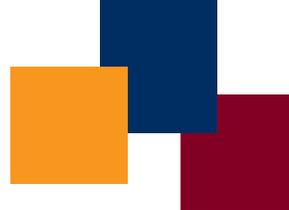
The 3-day training course was delivered by 3 very experienced presenters: Ms. Zhang Mingxia from CNAS, Mr. Dan Tholen from A2LA and Dr. Robert Audette from SCC. In total there were 18 participants from APLAC members – NATA, CNAS, HKAS, NABL, IAJapan, RRA, ema, PNGLAS, PAO, SAC, TAF, NSC-ONAC, NVLAP, ACLASS, BoA and PTA, and 1 from the IAAC region. The technical backgrounds of the participants ranged from calibration to medical and other various testing fields. In addition to the intensive lectures, workshops were held between sessions to help participants exchange ideas and associate the standards with real practice. Feedback from the participants showed that the training activity has been very successful and beneficial to its participants. ♦

MoU Signing between TAF and Eight Public Health Bureaus in Northern Taiwan...

Eight Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) were signed on 17 September 2010 between the Taiwan Accreditation Foundation (TAF) and the eight Public Health Bureaus in Northern Taiwan, underscoring their commitment to working together in promoting the value of ISO 15189 accreditation for medical testing laboratories and to enhancing the quality of medical testing services. The eight public health bureaus are: Department of Health of Taipei City Government, Public Health Bureau of Taipei County, Public Health Bureau of Yilan County, Keelung City Health Bureau, Public Health Bureau of Taoyuan County, Public Health Bureau of Hsinchu County,

Bureau of Health of Hsinchu City and Public Health Bureau of Miaoli County. These partnerships reflect the closer relationship between the TAF and the domestic public health bureaus and the collaborative efforts to exchange expertise of relevant technical skills by means of co-sponsoring workshops/trainings, co-planning PT programs, co-establishing accreditation criteria for medical testing labs, participating in each other's working groups and committees and increasing mutual communications. The ultimate goal of the MoU is to promote adoption of accreditation results and eventually improve people's health. ♦

CALA - Canada



By Colleen Cotter, Accreditation Manager

Staff Changes...

The Canadian Association for Laboratory Accreditation (CALA) is pleased to welcome two new staff to the organization.

Brenda Dashney is CALA's new Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Ms. Dashney has a multifaceted background in financial management, strategic planning, and administration. She holds a Bachelor of Commerce - Accounting degree from the University of Ottawa and has a Certified Management Accounting (CMA) designation. She gained her extensive experience most recently through her work as the Vice-President of Finance and Operations at the Ottawa Centre for Research and Innovation (OCRI) which is Ottawa's leading economic development corporation and, prior to that, with Amnesty International Canada and the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada.

Brenda has also volunteered for many local organizations, spending 20 years with the Cumberland Grads Junior Hockey Club in various roles. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of Amnesty International Canada as Treasurer.

Ms. Cathy Wylie recently joined the CALA Management team as the Training Manager. Cathy comes to us with an extensive background in performance improvement in technical training, including training needs analysis, training materials development (including e-learning) and training delivery in a technical environment. Her management experience has included positions in training, documentation and software verification for firms such as Innovatia Inc., Nortel Networks and Bell Northern Research.

Cathy was attracted to the role of Training Manager at CALA because it would allow her to work with groups both across the organization as well as outside of CALA in order to assess our members' training requirements and position CALA to offer the training courses and services to our members that will ensure their ongoing success, while at the same time growing our overall training capability.

In addition to her training expertise, Cathy also volunteers her services as a current Director on the Board of the Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada.

Cathy replaces Mr. Edgar (Ned) Gravel. Ned resigned his post as CALA's Training Manager in order to pursue a new role in the private sector laboratory community. CALA – and I'm sure all his APLAC 'family' - wish Ned every success in his new post as Health, Safety, Environment and Quality (HSEQ) Director, Americas for Exova in Toronto. ♦

A2LA - U.S.A.

By Teresa C. Barnett, Quality Manager

Who we are...

The American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA) is a nonprofit, non-governmental, public service, membership society. The mission of A2LA is to provide comprehensive services in laboratory accreditation and laboratory-related training. Services are available to any type of organization, be it private or government, and all accreditation programs are based on internationally accepted criteria for competence. Membership in A2LA is open to any individual, institution or corporation interested in supporting our mission of “one accreditation accepted everywhere”.

As of 1 December 2010 A2LA has accredited 2,178 organizations. Laboratories are accredited in the fields of: Acoustics & Vibration, Biological, Calibration, Chemical, Construction Materials, Electrical, Environmental, Forensic Examination, Geotechnical, Information Technology, Mechanical, Medical, Nondestructive, and Thermal. In addition to these broad fields, specifically-tailored programs are available for animal drug testing, automotive electromagnetic compatibility (EMC) testing, environmental & environmental lead (Pb) testing, food & pharmaceutical testing, putting green material testing and veterinary diagnostic testing. A2LA also accredits Inspection Bodies, Proficiency Testing Providers, Reference Material Producers and Product Certification Bodies.

A2LA is a signatory to the ILAC, APLAC and IAAC multilateral recognition agreements, all of which facilitate the acceptance of test and calibration data between A2LA-accredited organizations and dozens of economies around the globe. In addition, A2LA has earned recognition from over 30 federal, state and local government agencies, companies and associations in the United States. ♦

Recent news...

NEW ACCREDITATION PROGRAMS:

Information Technology (IT) Laboratories Testing CMC Software...

A2LA is proud to announce a new program for Information Technology testing laboratories that test software designed to generate the Calibration and Measurement Capability (CMC) claims placed on an accredited organization's Scope of Accreditation. The new program was developed to expand A2LA's current Information Technology (IT) testing program to specifically include laboratories that test CMC-generating software. As part of the new program, A2LA has also developed new requirements for end users who elect to utilize the software in lieu of creating traditional uncertainty calculations.

This program is only applicable to the testing of software that can generate CMC values that support an accredited organization's Scope of Accreditation. It is not intended to be applied to software where the main function is to determine the actual uncertainty of a particular measurement to report to the client or to be a “number cruncher” that simply runs inputs through an equation. The intent of this new program is to offer an option for those A2LA-accredited organizations that prefer to rely on CMC-generating software rather than traditional uncertainty calculations and it should also allow for greater uniformity of measurement uncertainty claims. In addition, Information Technology testing laboratories gain the benefit of having their procedures validated for calculating the CMC values per the *Guide to the Expression of Uncertainty in Measurement (GUM)* requirements.

It is important to note that those A2LA-accredited organizations that prefer to rely on traditional uncertainty calculations to support the Scope of Accreditation may continue to do so even if they use some form of software simply to tabulate and sum manually-entered contributors. This new program allows for an option of using CMC-generating software solely in lieu of this traditional process.

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Special Inspection Agencies...

A2LA has also expanded its accreditation activities to encompass Special Inspection Agencies in New York City, NY.

The criteria for Special Inspection Agency accreditation require agencies to provide objective evidence of compliance to ISO/IEC 17020 by gaining and maintaining accreditation through a recognized accreditation body (such as A2LA). The accreditation will confirm compliance to ASTM E329 and local requirements associated with the International Building Code, Chapter 17. A2LA has created its *R310 – Specific Requirements: Special Inspection Agencies Inspection Body Accreditation Program* document to highlight the specific areas which go above and beyond the requirements of ISO/IEC 17020.

A2LA is also working with other jurisdictions to write relevant requirements to expand this program offering further.

NEW FIELD OF ACCREDITATION:

In early 2009 a report was published in the U.S. by the Committee on Identifying the Needs of the Forensic Sciences Community, National Research Council, entitled *Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward*. In the report, a detailed description of the status of forensic science in the United States was given and key recommendations were made to help improve the quality and reliability of forensic science in America. Included in the list of recommendations was mandatory accreditation and personnel certification.

Upon reviewing this report and in response to requests from our customers, A2LA began work to create a forensic accreditation program. While the main focus of the program was considered to be forensic testing and inspection (scene investigation) conducted by medical, mechanical, electrical, engineering, software and environmental organizations, it was determined that the program should be designed so that it could apply to all those organizations performing inspections and testing for use in criminal and civil proceedings including government and private laboratories and inspection bodies.

On 23 April 2010, A2LA hosted the first meeting of its Forensic Examination Advisory Committee (FEAC). At the meeting, technical experts from various disciplines within the forensic sciences discussed key issues and made motions regarding A2LA policy for the developing forensic accreditation program. Also in 2009 and 2010, A2LA attended many forensic conferences and discussed with

key contacts needs within the forensic community and what A2LA could offer in the way of accreditation.

In July 2010, after many months of research and development, A2LA announced the launch of the A2LA Forensic Accreditation Program. A2LA is now the first accreditation body in the United States to provide internationally recognized accreditation to ISO/IEC 17020 for crime scene units and other forensic inspection bodies. It is hoped that the addition of this program to A2LA's accreditation offerings will help to bridge the gap between what is normally considered forensic examination (DNA, Fingerprints, Crime Scene Examination) and the often overlooked work of the commercial industry for civil litigation (Forensic Engineering, Failure Analysis, Accident Analysis).

The program consists of two separate accreditation options. The first is for assessment and accreditation of forensic testing laboratories. Laboratories seeking accreditation under this option will be assessed for compliance to the international standard ISO/IEC 17025 and A2LA policies and requirements.

The second option is for the assessment and accreditation of forensic inspection bodies (e.g., crime scene units, forensic engineering – structural failure inspection). Organizations seeking accreditation under this option will be assessed for compliance to the international standard ISO/IEC 17020 and A2LA policies and requirements.

It is hoped that, with further research and development and with the support of the forensic community, the A2LA forensic program will offer accreditation to all those organizations performing such work.

NEW RECOGNITIONS OF A2LA PROGRAMS:

NIST Scope of Recognition for Product Certification Body Accreditation...

A2LA's Scope of Recognition from the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) has been expanded to include Japan's Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication (MIC) requirements of the Radio Law and Telecommunication Business Act.

This expanded recognition now enables A2LA to perform assessments of Telecommunication Certification Bodies (TCBs) to ISO/IEC Guide 65 and specific regulatory/technical requirements for the following countries: United States (FCC), Canada (IC), Singapore (IDA), Hong Kong (OFTA), and Japan (MIC)

(continued on page ten)

A2LA's recognition by NIST was expanded to include the following schemes:

Telecommunications Business Law (Terminal Equipment) -
Scope A1 - Terminal equipment for the purpose of calls;
Scope A2 - Other terminal equipment.

Radio Law (Radio Equipment) -

Scope B1 - Unlicensed station (all classes of equipment);
Scope B2 - Licensed station (all classes of equipment);
Scope B3 - Licensed station – others (all classes of equipment).

In accordance with Japan's Telecommunication Business Act and Radio Law, TCBs may apply for **one or more** MRA scope categories (A1, A2, B1, B2, and B3); however, within each scope category, the TCB must be qualified to certify **all** of the equipment classes.

EPA ENERGY STAR...

A2LA is also pleased to announce that it has gained formal recognition as an accreditation body for the EPA ENERGY STAR® program as of 20 July 2010.

The EPA recently published its *Final Conditions and Criteria for Accreditation Bodies*. In order to be recognized for the accreditation of testing laboratories, an accreditation body must be a signatory to an internationally-recognized mutual recognition arrangement (MRA) such as the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) MRA. A2LA became a Full Member Signatory to the ILAC MRA in November 2000 after successfully completing the Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC) peer evaluation process. In order to achieve EPA recognition for the accreditation of certification bodies, an accreditation body must be a signatory to the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) Multilateral Recognition Agreement (MLA). The EPA has notified A2LA that they will fully recognize A2LA-accredited certification bodies on an interim basis until A2LA obtains full signatory status within the IAF MLA – which is expected by the end of 2010. As such, A2LA has successfully met the requirements set forth in the EPA *Final Conditions and Criteria for Accreditation Bodies* document, and was one of the first accreditation bodies recognized by the EPA to accredit under this program.

The EPA *Final Conditions and Criteria for Testing Laboratories* document was also published alongside the requirements for accreditation bodies. Laboratories wishing to test products for ENERGY STAR compliance are now required

to become accredited to ISO/IEC 17025:2005 through a recognized accreditation body, or participate in a Supervised Manufacturer's Testing Laboratory (SMTL) or Witnessed Manufacturer's Testing Laboratory (WMTL) program through an EPA-recognized certification body.

NEW A2LA SERVICES:

Training...

A2LA and Workplace Training have recently partnered to offer a series of webinars on topics that were identified as being of particular interest during recent and past surveys of A2LA's constituents. The first of these webinars (lead by instructor, Dilip Shah) was conducted on 18 August 2010 and was titled **Calibration Equipment Interval Analysis**. Additional webinars were also held on the topics of **Introduction to Measurement Uncertainty** and **Understanding ANSI/INCSLI Z540.3**

A2LA has also partnered with the Institute for Quality Management in Healthcare (IQMH) and is now offering an interactive online education tool, **Decoding ISO 15189™**, which is designed to help medical laboratories prepare for ISO 15189 accreditation. With this educational series, laboratories may learn at their own pace, re-watch modules, download a library of PDFs, view video coaching tips, access useful tools such as workbooks, templates and samples, and set up multiple user accounts.

Given the popularity of the webinars held to date, A2LA expects to develop this as a significant counterpart to our already well-established public and on-site training courses.

If you would like more information about any of the topics reported by A2LA, please contact the author at tbarnett@A2LA.org. ♦



From the APLAC Secretariat...

By Michael Fraser and Janet Clark

APLAC Secretariat

APLAC 2010 GA Week

A very successful week of APLAC 2010 meetings took place in Osaka, Japan (4-10 December). Congratulations and a big thank you to our joint hosts, IAJapan, JAB and VLAC, and the very friendly staff in the Secretariat room, led most ably by Kotaro Yoshida. The meetings were very well organised and all delegates thoroughly enjoyed the social events, especially the formal dinner when the ladies from the Secretariat room dressed in their beautiful kimonos. Although no longer a member of APLAC, we would also like to thank JCLA for the contribution they made to organising the meetings.

We were pleased to have the EA Chair, Graham Talbot, and the PAC Secretary, Belinda Mort, attend for the week.

Congratulations go to the following members:

- AIHA-LAP, LLC (USA) on being accepted as a signatory to the APLAC MRA for testing;
- JAB (Japan) on the extension of its APLAC MRA signatory status to include inspection and the continuation of its signatory status in the APLAC MRA for testing, medical testing to ISO 15189, and calibration;
- BLQS, DMSc (Thailand) on the continuation of its signatory status in the APLAC MRA for testing and medical testing to ISO 15189;
- BLA-DSS (Thailand) on the continuation of its signatory status in the APLAC MRA for testing;
- PJLA (USA) on the continuation of its signatory status in the APLAC MRA for testing and calibration;
- SAC (Singapore) on the continuation of its signatory status in the APLAC MRA for testing, calibration, inspection and medical testing to ISO 15189;
- Standards Malaysia (Malaysia) on the continuation of its signatory status in the APLAC MRA for testing, calibration and medical testing to ISO 15189;
- L-A-B (USA) on the continuation of its signatory status in the APLAC MRA for testing and calibration;

The series of meetings that formed APLAC 2010 were most successful.

Our congratulations go to Ms. Chang Kwei Fern of SAC who was elected as APLAC Chair for a 2-year term, commencing on 1 January 2011. We would like to thank the outgoing Chair, Mr Terence Chan, for his leadership of APLAC over the past 4 years. It is pleasing to note that Terence will remain on the Board of Management as Immediate Past Chair.

Our congratulations go to Roxanne Robinson, (A2LA), Regina Robertson (NATA) and Vu Xuan Thuy (BoA) who were elected to the APLAC Board of Management for a 2-year term, starting on 1 January 2011.

We thank our Committee Chairs, Zhang Mingxia (Training), Trace McInturff (Technical), Dan Tholen (Proficiency Testing) and Alan Patterson (Public Information), for chairing successful and productive meetings.

Congratulations to Dr Koichi Nara of IAJapan, elected to the position of Proficiency Testing Chair, replacing Dan Tholen who advised the Board of Management that he would not be seeking another term as Chair. We thank Dan for his contribution to proficiency testing in APLAC, not only as Chair but also through his membership on the committee for many years.

Congratulations also to Zhang Mingxia, Trace McInturff and Alan Patterson who were re-elected for additional 2-year terms as Chairs of their respective committees, commencing on 1 January 2011.

Since the General Assembly meeting, APLAC has been advised that Mr Patterson has resigned as Chief Executive of NATA and, as such, also as Chair of the PIC. We thank Alan for his contribution to the PIC not only as Chair but also as a member of the Committee and we wish him well in his new endeavors. We hope to be able to announce a new Chair for this committee soon.

The APLAC General Assembly endorsed the APLAC budget for 2011 which includes funding for eight proficiency testing schemes due for completion in 2011, funding for six proficiency testing schemes commencing in 2011, funding for a training course in Proficiency Testing statistical methods, partial funding for a joint training program of workshops with PTB, and support for the attendance of one member of staff from two developing economies' non-member Accreditation Bodies at next year's General Assembly and Technical meetings to be held in Manila.

(continued on page twelve)

Training Courses

A 3-day training course on the recently issued ISO/IEC 17043 was held in Chinese Taipei from 14-16 September and hosted by TAF. A 3 day training course, hosted by CNAS, on the updated version of ISO Guide 34 was held in Beijing from 20-22 September.

Both of these courses were very well attended and we sincerely thank our hosts and presenters for their time and effort in conducting these training courses.

APLAC Documents

Members are advised when new or revised APLAC documents are placed on the APLAC web site. Many documents have been updated since September (mainly reflecting the change in the address for the Secretariat) and there are too many to list individually. We invite members and other interested parties to view our website for the most up-to-date documents.

Meetings

Michael Fraser represented APLAC at the SCSC meetings held in Sendai, Japan, in September. The meetings attended included the Trade Facilitation Task Force (Special Session on Carbon Foot Printing), the 8th Conference on Standards and Conformance for Green Harmonization (Energy Performance Standards for Refrigerators) at which APLAC presented a paper on energy labeling and reporting and concluded with the SCSC plenary.

Michael also represented APLAC at the launch of the African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC) and the first General Assembly meeting held in Cairo, Egypt in September. The launch was attended by over 50 dignitaries from African countries, regional trading blocs, diplomats from various countries and a variety of regional bodies. The first AFRAC General Assembly was held immediately following the launch. At the General Assembly, the AFRAC Bylaws were reviewed and approved and the AFRAC trademark (name and logo) was also approved.

- Mr Hassan Shaarawi (Egyptian Accreditation Council, EGAC) was elected the first Chairman of AFRAC.
- Mr Mensan Lawson - Hechelli (Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS) was elected to the position of Treasurer.
- The South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) which had been the interim Secretariat was elected to the position of Secretariat.

In addition to the above, Michael represented APLAC at the ILAC General Assembly and associated meetings in Shanghai, People's Republic of China, in October. The ILAC meetings were very successful and were conducted in a congenial atmosphere. The meetings attended include the ILAC PTCG, ILAC Accreditation Issues Committee, ILAC ARC, ILAC Laboratory Committee, ILAC and Joint General Assembly and the ILAC Arrangement Council. In the margins of the formal meetings, the APLAC Chair, MRA Council Chair and Secretary met with the PAC Chair, MLA Chair and Secretary to discuss areas of closer cooperation with each other. A meeting of the APLAC Chair and Committee Chairs was also held with IAAC to discuss areas of closer cooperation and harmonization. An informal meeting of the APLAC Board of Management was also held.

It was pleasing to have Mr Shinichi Iguchi, Chair of PAC, attend the recent Board of Management meeting.

The revision to the Memorandum of Understanding between APLAC and PAC was reviewed by the PAC Executive Committee and the revised MOU was reviewed at the General Assembly and will be signed by correspondence in early 2011.

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to APLAC in 2010 and helped make it such a successful year. Special thanks to the APLAC Chair, Terence Chan, and the BoM members who guide us all while doing their "real" full-time jobs as well!

We wish everyone a peaceful festive season and all the very best for 2011 and the Year of the Rabbit. ♦

