

**APLAC** is an organisation of laboratory accreditation bodies in the Asia Pacific area that have expressed a desire to cooperate in fostering the development of competent laboratories 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

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**APLAC** also maintains an Internet site at:  
**www.aplac.org**

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## ***New ILAC signatory from Thailand***

Reported by Panadda S.

*The Bureau of Laboratory Quality Standards (BLQS) under the Department of Medical Sciences (DMSc) of Thailand has been accepted as a new signatory to the ILAC MRA since 19 September 2003 after signing the APLAC MRA on 14 November last year with the scope of health products and medical testing.*

The Bureau of Laboratory Quality Standards (BLQS) was established on 8 July 1997 under the Department of Medical Sciences (DMSc), Ministry of Public Health. The main task of the Bureau is to deliver health safeguard and better quality of life to Thai people by the laboratory accreditation process. BLQS, DMSc accredits the laboratories in the area of physical, chemical, biological and clinical testing for food, beverages and water, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, medical devices, toxic household products and clinical specimens. The testing criteria include domestic and overseas customer and regulatory requirements.

Two international standards are used as the accreditation criteria:

- ISO/IEC 17025 for health product laboratories and medical laboratories
- ISO 15189 for medical laboratories

BLQS, DMSc plans to promote the accreditation to food industry in the year 2004 in order to support the government policy to post Thailand as "Kitchen of the World".

All activities of BLQS, DMSc and the accredited laboratory directory are available on the website "[www.dmsc.moph.go.th](http://www.dmsc.moph.go.th)".



Representatives of BLQS, DMSc from Thailand and of DSM from Malaysia signed the APLAC MRA on 14 November 2002 during the APLAC General Assembly and Technical Meetings in Vancouver, Canada.



Representatives of BLQS, DMSc from Thailand signed the ILAC MRA on 19 September 2003 during the ILAC/ IAF General Assembly in Bratislava, Slovakia.



# TLAS UPDATE

Reported by Panuwong K.

*December is always a good occasion when everyone can review his or her performance over the year. We, the Thai Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (TLAS) under Thai Industrial Standards Institute (TISI) are no exception. After having reviewed our past performances, we found the year 2003 a comparatively successful year. Our achievement comprises granting certificates to forty-one laboratories, restructuring technical subcommittees, constructing our own ISO/IEC 17025 assessor training course, organizing seminars, and strengthening relationship with our foreign partners.*

## ● **New executives of TISI**

Mr. Surachai Thaleongchok has been appointed TISI Secretary-General in October 2002. With his experience of more than thirty years at TISI, Mr. Thaleongchok is one of the valuable experts in conformity assessment. His result-based management style coupled with the active support of his two deputies, Mr. Surasak Asvadorndeja and Mr Anant Suwanapal will certainly bring great progress to TISI. Moreover, in May 2003, Mrs. Suttinee Poopaka has joined TLAS as director. She is also active and commits herself to the planned targets.

Today TLAS has four divisions, previously two, and ten technical subcommittees, previously six, to cope with an increasing demand for accreditation. Since January we have granted thirty-one certificates to newly accredited laboratories and ten certificates for reassessments and scope extensions. In total, seventy-seven testing and thirty-seven calibration laboratories have already been accredited.

## ● **Training and seminars**

One of TLAS key performance indicators for 2003 is to have our own ISO/IEC 17025 assessor training course in Thai version. To achieve this, an ad hoc group comprising senior



Trainers and trainees smiling after the examination finish on the last day of training.

lead assessors was established to prepare a delicate training course following APLAC TR001 guidelines. The first program was launched during 29 September - 3 October 2003 at the Dusit Resort and Polo Club, Hua-Hin. Twenty trainees joined the course. Comments and recommendations received from the training course were collected and analyzed for improvement.

According to TLAS Director, after all the weak points have been corrected by the end of 2003, the training course will be organized for the public at least once or twice a year to produce new assessors and to refresh existing inactive assessors.

As laboratory accreditation is a means to recognize the technical equivalence, technical assessors and experts must be competent and perform the assessment in a consistent manner.

In order to improve the capability of the technical assessors, a seminar for technical assessor was held during 12 -14 May 2003 at the Regent Cha-um Hotel, Petchburi. Ninety participants were separated into five groups as follows:

- construction material testing
- electrical testing
- chemical testing
- mass calibration
- temperature calibration

The seminar was very successful. As a result, many technical drafts containing assessment guidelines as well as acceptance criteria for each specific field were prepared. Some active participants even volunteered to elaborate these drafts further after the seminar and a number of unofficial technical meetings have been arranged for this purpose throughout the year. It is planned that the final drafts will be submitted to the relevant subcommittees for approval.

### ● **Feedback from customers**

TLAS welcomes all kinds of feedback through a suggestion box, questionnaires and seminars. To reach this end, a seminar on laboratory quality management was held on 2 September 2003 at the Miracle Grand Convention Hotel, Bangkok. Accredited and applicant laboratories were invited to join the seminar. More than two hundred quality managers and laboratory management actively participated and provided useful information to our management team. A question was raised on how to shorten the time of accreditation process. It is planned that this kind of seminar will be included in the TLAS calendar for next year.

### ● **TLAS and the international cooperation**

TLAS strengthens the partnership with internationally recognized organizations through many channels:

Through the cooperation with JICA, a proficiency testing program on chemical analysis of steel bars, called JICA/TISI/TLAS T001 was conducted. Total thirty-nine laboratories from six ASEAN countries as well as Japan participated in this program. Additionally, when the “JICA/TISI seminar and workshop on industrial standardization in Bangkok” was held during 15 – 17 September 2003 at the Novotel Hotel, Bangkok, the PT final reports were presented and found to be very useful to the participating laboratories as well as the accreditation bodies.

TLAS has worked closely with PTB, the national metrology institute of Germany, in the field of calibration. The focus of PTB is on strengthening the metrology system and calibration laboratory accreditation. The deliverables included experts,



Delegates from six ASEAN countries and Japan took a photo at the opening of the JICA/TISI seminar and workshop on industrial standardization in Bangkok.

consultancy services, training and seminars. Two TLAS staff were sponsored to attend the workshop “Know-how exchange for assessors of calibration laboratories” in Santiago, Chile during 23 – 26 September 2003. The workshop was hosted by INN of Chile and DKD of Germany

As the test of electromagnetic compatibility (EMC) for electrical appliances and the test of emission for motorcycles and automobiles are compulsory as specified by the Thai Industrial Standards (TISs) and as the local experts in these emerging testing areas are scarce, European technical assessors were invited to join the team. UKAS was one of our valuable resources. Our local experts also joined in witnessing the assessments.

During 6 – 7 November 2003, a training course on “Introduction to laboratory accreditation and ISO/IEC 17025 for microbiological laboratory” was organized by TLAS for the participants from Myanmar under the “Food Administration” program sponsored by WHO.

### ● **Paving the way forwards**

As the national laboratory accreditation body and the APLAC/ILAC MRA signatory, TLAS is committed to sustain the core competencies through professional management, competent assessors and reliable accreditation process, up-to-date technical expertise, customer focus and strong partnership.

*In spite of our successes in 2003, we hope to be able to reach a higher target next year.*

## The metrological infrastructure of Thailand is strengthened by NIMT

Reported by Ajchara C.

*NIMT, the Calibration Measurement Capabilities (CMCs) of the National Institute of Metrology (Thailand), has been accepted by APMP and BIPM since July 2003. The building-up of the calibration laboratory network and the in-country intercomparison programme to strengthen the metrological infrastructure of Thailand are in progress.*

### **The Calibration Measurement Capabilities (CMCs)**

To fulfill the requirements of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA), NIMT declared the capabilities of their measurement services by submitting the CMCs to the Asia Pacific Metrology Programme (APMP) and other Regional Metrology Organization (RMO). Electrical quantities which had been selected by NIMT as the first package of CMCs were approved and included in BIPM website "www.bipm.org" in July 2003.

### **Building-up of calibration service network**

Since 2002 NIMT has provided technical supports by means of consultancy service to the calibration laboratories which wish to improve the quality of services provided to the items. All calibration laboratories are encouraged to apply to join the scheme. The consultancy service includes assessment, evaluations, training and intercomparison.

After completing the scheme, the calibration laboratory should be able to demonstrate the competence and ready to apply for accreditation from the Thai Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (TLAS). Today eight laboratories are included in this network and other four will be ready to join by the end of 2003.

### **In-country intercomparison programme**

The in-country intercomparison result is a key evidence of the laboratory competence. The programme has commenced since 2001. Sixty calibration laboratories have been participating in the following fields of measurements:

- 1) Electrical : Digital Multimeter 6 1/2 Digits (DC-AC Voltage, DC-AC Current), Standard Resistors ;
- 2) Pressure : Pressure Transducer with indicator ;
- 3) Mass : Mass 1 kg ;
- 4) Acoustics : Sound level Meter ;
- 5) Temperature : Liquid in Glass, Industrial Platinum Resistance Thermometer ;
- 6) Length : Micrometer, Gauge Blocks.

By using the ISO Guide 43 : 1993 to evaluate the results of intercomparisons, it was evident that most of participating laboratories were competent to perform measurements.

## MST as an interlaboratory comparison provider

Reported by Sumnouw T.

Metrology Society of Thailand (MST) is one of the key supporters of the Thai Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (TLAS). MST is a non-profit organization comprising scientists and metrologists from private firms, universities and government agencies. The mission of MST is to promote and resolve metrological difficulty which is not a direct responsibility of the National Institute of Metrology (Thailand).

MST offers training services, technical conferences and interlaboratory comparison programmes for both members and non-members. In 2003, MST hosted four interlaboratory comparison programmes as below:

Program No.	Program Title	No. of Participating Laboratories	Current Status
MST2003-01	5 MHz Rubidium frequency standard	10	Final report preparation
MST2003-02	Digital multimeter, 6 1/2 digits DCV, ACV, DCI, ACI and Resistance	20	Interim report preparation
MST2003-03	Plug gauge Outside diameter 26.2 mm	6	Final report preparation
MST2003-04	Digital thermometer	18	Interim report preparation

MST is ready to support the calibration laboratories, accreditation bodies and the National Institute of Metrology (Thailand) in any kind of work for public benefit. Please see additional information on [www.mst.or.th](http://www.mst.or.th).



VLAC was established in April 1999 under the auspices of the three major Japanese industry associations in the field of electronics and communications (JEITA, JBMIA and CIAJ) as a private laboratory accreditation body for EMC testing laboratories.

In the past four years since its inauguration the number of client laboratories of VLAC has risen to seven. There are 15 sites belonging to those seven accredited laboratories. It is expected that VLAC now being a signatory of the APLAC MRA will attract more applicant sites than ever. Note that the scope of VLAC in the APLAC MRA is confined to EMC testing.



**A photo of VLAC signing ceremony**

Left to right: Anthony J Russell, MRA Council Chair; Seiichi Kawashima, General Manager of VLAC; Peter S Unger, APLAC Chair.

For more information, visit VLAC website at [www.vlac.co.jp](http://www.vlac.co.jp)

## **News from IAJapan**

### **From Juichi to Katuo**

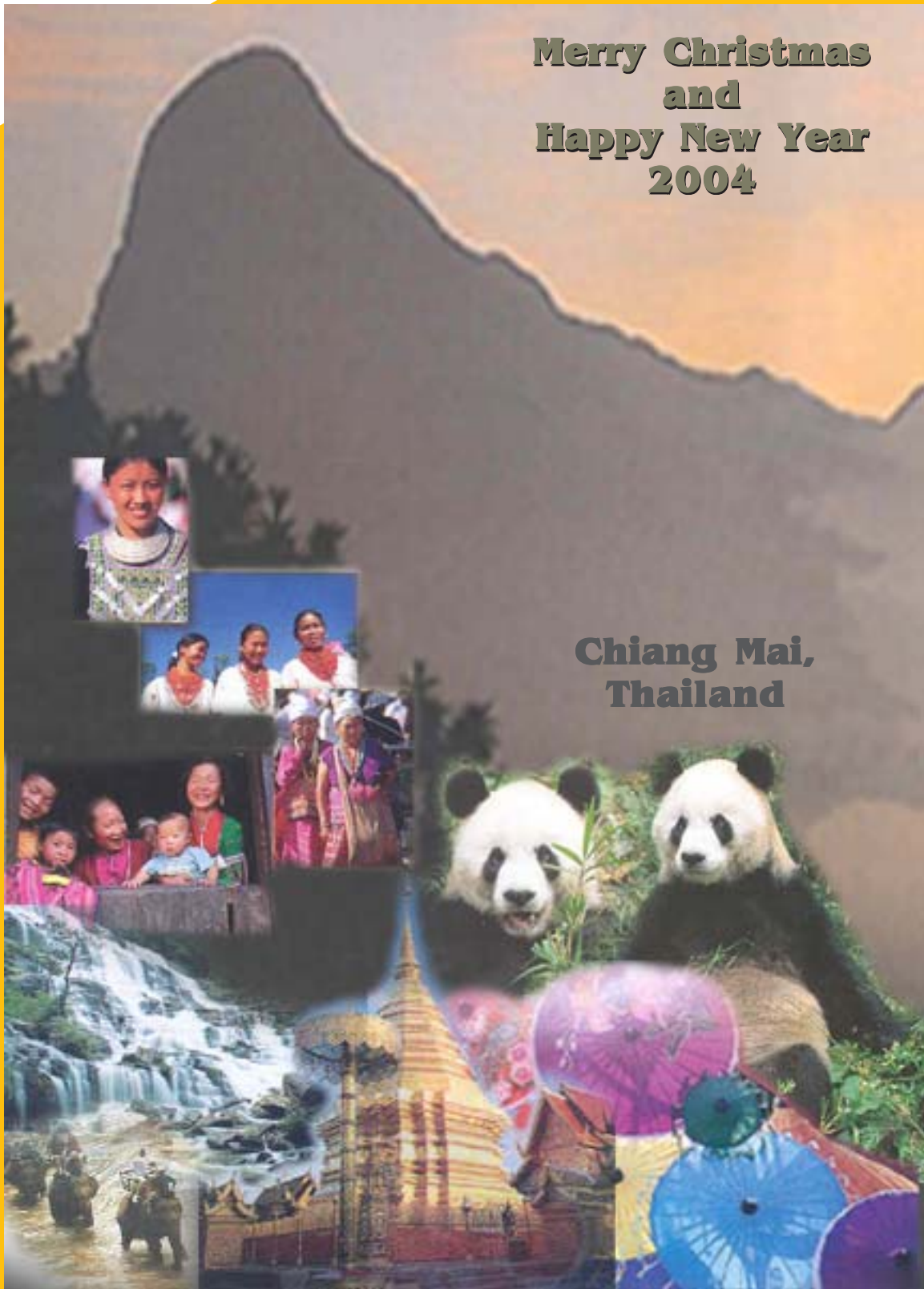
Dr. Katuo SETA was elected as a member of APLAC Board of Management for 2004 and 2005 in 9<sup>th</sup> APLAC General Assembly in Seoul, the Republic of Korea. He replaced Mr. Juichi NAGANO who was a member of APLAC BoM as Chief Executive of IAJapan from 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2003.

Dr. Seta is a metrologist and worked for National Metrology Institute of Japan (NMIJ) over 20 years. He has been engaged in Japan Calibration Service System (JCSS) and also engaged in establishing National Measurement Standards in NMIJ. He was awarded for his scientific articles in "Measurement Science and Technology" in 1999, and in "Japanese Journal of Precision Engineering" in 2003. Also, he won a Prize of Excellent Research from the President of former AIST in 1999 for development of long distance measuring instruments.

Dr. Seta is former Executive Secretary of Asia Pacific Metrology Programme (APMP).  
Mr. Juichi NAGANO is now Director, Multilateral Trade System Department, METI.

**Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year  
2004**

**Chiang Mai,  
Thailand**



## APLAC PUBLICATIONS LIST

Most of the following APLAC documents are available from the APLAC web site. They can also be emailed out by the APLAC Secretariat as PDF files.

**Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation Secretariat, 71 – 73 Flemington Road, North Melbourne, VIC 3051, Australia. Tel: +61 3 9329 1633; fax: +61 3 9326 5148; email: [aplac@nata.asn.au](mailto:aplac@nata.asn.au)**

<b>APLAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement Council</b>		
APLAC MR001	Issue No. 4, 12/02	Procedures for Establishing and Maintaining Mutual Recognition Agreements Between Laboratory Accreditation Bodies
APLAC MR002	11/02	Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) text
APLAC MR003	Issue No. 7, 12/02	Application for Signatory Status in the APLAC Multilateral Mutual Recognition Arrangement (APLAC MRA)
APLAC MR004	Issue No. 2, 08/03	APLAC MRA Council Working Group on Evaluation Performance Policy and Procedures
APLAC MR005	Issue No. 1, 09/03	Procedure for Training of APLAC MRA Evaluators
<b>APLAC Nominations Committee</b>		
APLAC NC001	Issue No. 2, 12/02	APLAC Nominations Committee and the APLAC Nomination Process
<b>APLAC Proficiency Testing Committee</b>		
APLAC PT001	Issue No. 3, 03/03	APLAC Calibration Interlaboratory Comparisons
APLAC PT002	Issue No. 3, 03/03	APLAC Testing Interlaboratory Comparisons
APLAC PT003	Issue No. 3, 02/03	APLAC Proficiency Testing Directory
APLAC PT004	Issue No. 2, 08/03	APLAC Measurement Audits
<b>APLAC Public Information Committee</b>		
APLAC PR001	Issue No. 1, 01/01	APLAC Publications Numbering Policy
APLAC PR003	Issue No. 2, 02/01	Procedure for Adoption of APLAC Documents
APLAC PR007	Issue No. 6, 08/03	APLAC – Its Role and Structure – PowerPoint Presentation
APLAC PR008	Issue No. 10, 06/03	International Recognition of Accredited Test and Inspection Reports
APLAC PR009	Issue No. 2, 01/03	APLAC Procedures for Editors of <i>APLAC News Notes</i>
<b>APLAC Secretariat</b>		
APLAC SEC001	Issue No. 3, 12/02	APLAC Memorandum of Understanding
APLAC SEC004	Issue No. 4, 12/02	APLAC Rules of Procedure
APLAC SEC009	Issue No. 27, 10/03	APLAC Publications List
APLAC SEC017	Issue No. 8, 07/03	APLAC Application for Membership
APLAC SEC020	Issue No. 29, 08/03	APLAC General Assembly Delegates List
APLAC SEC021	Issue No. 11, 08/03	APLAC Board of Management Membership List
APLAC SEC022	Issue No. 7, 06/03	APLAC Committee Chairs and Secretaries List
APLAC SEC023	Issue No. 28, 08/03	APLAC MRA Council Membership List
APLAC SEC026	Issue No. 8, 10/03	APLAC Nominations Committee Membership List
APLAC SEC027	Issue No. 10, 06/03	APLAC Public Information Committee Membership List
APLAC SEC028	Issue No. 12, 06/03	APLAC Proficiency Testing Committee Membership List
APLAC SEC029	Issue No. 15, 06/03	APLAC Technical Committee Membership List
APLAC SEC030	Issue No. 14, 06/03	APLAC Training Committee Membership List
APLAC SEC035	Issue No. 22, 08/03	APLAC MRA Signatories List
APLAC SEC036	Issue No. 2, 08/03	APLAC Complaints Handling Procedures

<b>APLAC Secretariat</b>		
APLAC SEC037	Issue No. 1, 02/01	APLAC Document Control and Document Format
APLAC SEC038	Issue No. 10 10/03	APLAC Membership Summary List
APLAC SEC039	Issue No. 8, 05/03	APLAC MRA Signatories Summary List
APLAC SEC040	Issue No. 2, 06/03	APLAC Procedure for Issuing Invoices for Annual Fees
APLAC SEC041	Issue No. 1, 06/03	APLAC Guidelines for Hosts of the APLAC General Assembly and Associated Meetings (only available from the Secretariat)
APLAC SEC042	Issue No. 2, 07/03	APLAC Code of Ethics for Laboratory and Inspection Body Accreditation Organisations
APLAC SEC043	Issue No. 1, 10/02	APLAC Requirements for APLAC Funding Requests
APLAC SEC044	Issue No. 2, 08/03	APLAC Procedure for Appeals and Alternative Dispute Resolution Process
APLAC SEC045	Issue No. 1, 09/03	APLAC Procedure for Management Review and Internal Audits
<b>APLAC Technical Committee</b>		
APLAC TC002	Issue No. 1, 01/01	APLAC Internal Audits for Laboratories
APLAC TC003	Issue No. 1, 01/01	APLAC Management Review for Laboratories
APLAC TC004	Issue No. 1, 09/01	APLAC Method of Stating Test Results and Compliance with Specification
APLAC TC005	Issue No. 1, 03/03	APLAC Interpretation and Guidance on the Estimation of Uncertainty of Measurement in Testing
<b>APLAC Training Committee</b>		
APLAC TR001	Issue No. 1, 12/01	APLAC Guidelines on Training Course for Assessors