

2001

NIST Conformity Assessment Workshop

The National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act (NTTAA) of 1995 instructs Federal agencies to work with government and private sector organizations to coordinate testing, certification, inspection, laboratory accreditation, and other conformity assessment activities with the goal of reducing duplication and complexity. On Monday, December 3, 2001, NIST will present a Workshop in which you can learn how various federal agencies are successfully following the letter and the spirit of the law. Agency representatives will describe the processes they use to scope out conformity assessment alternatives, evaluate prospective partners, and ensure a good fit with their missions, regulatory responsibilities, and procurement activities. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) has organized this Workshop in accordance with the NTTAA's mandate to coordinate conformity assessment activities of federal, state, and local entities with private-sector standards and conformity assessment activities. At the Workshop, standards executives, managers and staff members of regulatory agencies, and procurement personnel can survey various options for trimming "red tape" by using private sector conformity assessment programs or by other cooperative approaches. A general overview of the NTTAA will be presented, and the NIST Guidance to Federal Agencies on Conformity Assessment will be discussed. Panels will address topics ranging from private sector options to the range of potential approaches to testing, calibration, certification, and registration. Participants will hear the insights of top-level officials from key federal agencies. They also will learn about the National Cooperation for Laboratory Accreditation (NACLA), a nonprofit corporation established to coordinate domestic laboratory accreditation activities and to serve as the U.S. link to the worldwide lab accreditation system. A copy of the Agenda is available at www.nist.gov/public_affairs/confpage/conform.pdf. If you have questions, please e-mail Kathy Woods at kwoods@acil.org

NACLA Spring Workshop

The National Cooperation for Laboratory Accreditation (NACLA) will present a forum on Laboratory Accreditation on April 8-9, 2002, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, in Arlington, VA. The forum, to be held in conjunction with the NACLA Annual Meeting, will address the latest development in all areas of lab accreditation both nationally and internationally, as well as the direction in which accreditation is headed. The preliminary list of program subjects includes such topics as interpretations and implementation of ISO/IEC 17025, preparing for 17025 assessment, latest developments in PT/ILCs, the impact of dual U. S. accreditation systems - NACLA and NELAC, the role of regional cooperations, the use of key performance indicators in assessment, the challenge of measurement uncertainty, and how IAF registration and ILAC accreditation interact. The meeting registration fee for NACLA members is \$300 before 1/31/02 and \$340 after 1/31/02. For non-members, the rate is \$375 before 1/31/02 and \$425 after 1/31/02. Complete program details and official registration forms will be posted on the NACLA web site (www.nacla.net) in November. If you have questions, please e-mail Kathy Woods at kwoods@acil.org.

Honorary Memberships Awarded for 2001

The awards committees, ACIL President Bill Harper and the ACIL Board of Directors have completed the award selections for 2001. These awards will be presented at the Annual Banquet on Monday, September 10, 2001, at the Arizona Biltmore Resort.

The August newsletter announced that the Board of Directors had selected the following former ACIL members to receive **Honorary Membership: Ron Harris**, formerly of MDS Harris/MDS Pharma; **Bob Pfister**, formerly of Professional Service Industries (PSI); and **George and Molly Greene**, formerly of General Engineering Laboratories.

The **Lewis E. Harris** Fellow Award Committee (Chairman: Walter Poggi, ACIL past chair; Members: Bill Harper, ACIL chair, and Jerry Weathers, ACIL chair-elect) has selected **Grover Williams**, formerly of Trinity Engineering, to receive the 2001 Fellow Award for outstanding contributions to ACIL and the industry.

The **Roger W. Truesdail** Award Committee (Chairman: Walter Poggi, ACIL past chair; Members: Herb Wilgis, Penniman & Browne, and Warne Boyce, Microbac Laboratories—the two most recent recipients) has selected **Don Meyn**, Delta Testing & Inspection, to receive the 2001 Truesdail Award for outstanding service.

ACIL Chair Bill Harper has selected the following members to receive the 2001 Preston **Millar Awards: Tom Berg**, Minnesota Valley Testing; **Trevor Boyce**, Microbac Laboratories; **Roland Gubisch**, Intertek Testing Service; **Chris Harvey**, MET Laboratories; **Debra Hicks**, Pettigrew & Associates; **Dr. Deborah Hockman**, Silliker Laboratories; **Barbara Judge**, Compliance Certification Services; **Dr. David Kennedy**, Tekmar-Dohrmann; **Dick Kistner**, Raba-Kistner; **Rick Moore**, American Analytical Laboratories; **Jerry Parr**, Catalyst Information Resources; **Lars Reimann**, Eurofins; **Richard Reitz**, Retlif Testing Laboratories; **Don Sweeney**, D.L.S. Electronic; and **Mike Varner**, Southern Earth Sciences.

We applaud these outstanding leaders for their service to ACIL and the testing industry and look forward to recognizing their substantial contributions at the Annual Banquet next month.

2001 ACIL Seal of Excellence for Environmental Laboratories is Launched

Washington, DC August 6, 2001—The American Council of Independent Laboratories (ACIL) today announced the launch of its 2001 Seal of Excellence Program. The Program was developed in 1996 to address the environmental testing industry's need to improve its focus on quality issues and recognize the laboratories with exemplary quality performance.

The ACIL Seal of Excellence Program serves as a "Better Business Bureau" for environmental laboratories. It complements programs such as the National

Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Council and A2LA and provides information that is not available from other sources.

Participants agree to provide to clients and regulators impartial information on the quality of their analysis. Over 65 laboratories in the United States and abroad have participated since the program's inception. The Program is open to all independent environmental testing laboratories; it is not restricted to ACIL members only.

Participating laboratories submit an application and a brief Statement of Qualifications to the Program Administrator. Upon meeting all program requirements, a laboratory is registered as a participating laboratory by the Program Administrator. An Award will be presented to the top laboratory in each of the following categories: Timeliness, PT scores, and Overall Customer Satisfaction.

The Program includes a number of measurements that distinguish a laboratory's quality, including:

- Annual report documenting the laboratory's Customer Service and Proficiency Testing (PT) check sample rating against peer laboratories
- An internal quality control tool (a comparison of PT results against a national database).
- Benchmarking against objective criteria.
- Clear differentiation from non-Program laboratories.
- Public assertion that they are concerned and pro-active on issues involving data integrity and ethics.
- Recognition for outstanding performance.
- Marketing leverage with potential customers.
- The ability to use the designation, "An ACIL Seal of Excellence Participating Laboratory," in marketing efforts.
- Immediate alerts to significant customer service problems or trends.
- Access to hidden unstated customer complaints
- Improved customer relationships by involving an independent agency.
- The elimination or reduction of costs for internally conducted customer surveys.

Application materials are available from:

Patrick McMahon, Administrator
ACIL Seal of Excellence Program
PO Box 8032
Newark, DE 19714
(302) 995-2290 fax: (720) 293-3706
pmcmahon@advancedsys.com

All application materials, fees, and at least 20 completed customer survey cards must be submitted to the Program Administrator by November 1, 2001.

Founded in 1937, ACIL is the trade association representing independent scientific, engineering and testing firms. ACIL has more than 300 member companies operating approximately 1,500 facilities throughout the United States and the world.

2000 Seal of Excellence Recipients Announced

The American Council of Independent Laboratories (ACIL) announces the Seal of Excellence Award recipients for 2000.

This program provides users with a mechanism for evaluating environmental testing laboratories. Participants are committed to ensuring the integrity of data, meeting customer's quality needs and meeting or exceeding the standards of performance for the testing laboratory industry. No current environmental certification program ranks participating laboratories' 12 months of Proficiency Testing study rounds. No current evaluation program ranks customer responses to satisfaction with services. No current program requires a signed code of ethics statement by each laboratory location.

The award criterion is a set objective standard and only laboratories that meet the standard receive the award. The following laboratories have demonstrated their commitment to quality and customer service and have been awarded the ACIL Seal of Excellence:

(Alphabetical Order)

Alpha Analytical Labs, Inc.	Westborough	MA
Aspen Analytical	Colorado Springs	CO
Continental Analytical Services, Inc	Salina	KS
Del Mar Analytical	Phoenix	AZ
Del Mar Analytical	Colton	CA
Del Mar Analytical	Irvine	CA
Environmental Health Laboratories	South Bend	IN
Environmental Laboratory of the Pacific	Honolulu	HI
	Buffalo Grove	IL
Great Lakes Analytical Inc.		
KAR Laboratories Inc.	Kalamazoo	MI
Lancaster Laboratories	Lancaster	PA
M.J. Reider Associates, Inc.	Reading	PA
North Creek Analytical	Bend	OR
North Creek Analytical, Inc.	Spokane	WA
North Creek Analytical, Inc.	Bothell	WA
North Creek Analytical, Inc.	Beaverton	OR
Sequoia Analytical	Sacramento	CA
Sequoia Analytical	Morgan Hills	CA
SIMALABS International	Merrillville	IN
Star Analytical	Fort Worth	TX
STL Buffalo	Amherst	NY
STL Denver	Arvada	CO
TestAmerica, Inc	Bartlett	IL

TestAmerica, Inc.	Nashville	TN
TriMatrix Laboratories, Inc.	Grand Rapids	MI

Three Special Awards were issued this year as follows:

Top Overall Satisfaction: Continental Analytical, Salina, KS
Top Proficiency Testing: TriMatrix Laboratories, Grand Rapids, MI
Best Overall Timeliness: KAR Laboratories, Kalamazoo, MI

The results of the program's PT scores, customer satisfaction scores, list of Seal of Excellence Qualified Participants and the laboratory contact information are made public. All other customer information is held in the strictest confidence between the laboratory and the program administrator. For additional information, contact John Webb, Staff Director of the Environmental Sciences Section, American Council of Independent Laboratories at (202) 887-5872 or via email at jwebb@acil.org.

March 3, 2001

[NEW U.S.-CANADA ARRANGEMENT ADDS VALUE TO LABORATORY ACCREDITATION](#)

Testing and calibration laboratories accredited by NACLA-recognized accreditation bodies will now have their accreditation recognized in Canada, thanks to its signing of a bilateral recognition arrangement with the Standards Council of Canada (SCC).

SCC is Canada's federal crown corporation that oversees the National Standards System. Its Program for Accreditation of Laboratories - Canada (PALCAN) has accredited more than 250 laboratories in a variety of general testing and specialty areas, including calibration facilities.

To date, three U.S. accreditation bodies have been recognized by NACLA and are signatories to the NACLA mutual recognition arrangement (MRA): the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA), the International Conference of Building Officials Evaluation Service (ICBO ES), and the National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP).

The NACLA-SCC Bilateral Arrangement, which was signed at the NACLA annual meeting on April 3, 2001, will mean an increase in the bottom line for laboratories in the U.S. and Canada that operate in both countries given that it has the potential to reduce redundant accreditations and the costs of associated assessment activities. It will also promote mutual acceptance of testing and calibration results in both countries.

"This arrangement is a major accomplishment because it represents NACLA's first step into the international recognition arena," said Don Heirman, of Lucent Technologies, NACLA President. According to Peter Clark, SCC executive director, "the arrangement facilitates trade through the support of NAFTA principles and the reduction of technical barriers. That saves Canadian exporters the expense of retesting their products every time they want to sell their products in the U.S."

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