



A2LA PT Provider and RM Producer Accreditation Programs

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Overview

- History
 - Program Development
 - Program Characteristics
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A2LA's History

- Incorporated in 1978
 - non-profit
 - non-governmental
 - first five laboratories accredited in 1980
 - 1,000th laboratory accredited in 1988
 - October 2000 A2LA sign ILAC MRA

A2LA's Experience

- Certified several PT Providers in mid 1990s
 - Terminated registration program -MRA
- Accredited first PT Provider in 2000
 - ILAC G 13:2000
 - Environmental PT schemes

PT Provider Accreditation 2008

- 17 Accredited PT Providers
- 11 provide Environmental PT samples
- 4 provide Calibration PT schemes
- 1 provides food PT
- 1 provides PT for multiple fields

Types of PT Organizations

- 10 Commercial Businesses
- 2 Government Entities
- 2 Accreditation-Related Bodies
- 3 Non-profit Organizations
- 2 are located outside the USA
- Many of these PT Providers offer PT globally

RM Producer Experience

- Accredited first RM Producer in 2000
 - ISO Guide 34
- 3 RM Producers accredited several years
 - little program growth
 - all had accredited 17025 laboratories

RM Producer Accreditation 2008

- Five accredited RM Producers
 - Inorganic and Organic Chemical Standards
 - Metal Alloys
 - Biology

Program Development

- PTP and RMP Programs developed the same
- Expanded on existing accreditation programs
- Worked with external parties

Program Development-Expansion

- Expanded on existing programs by:
 - Utilizing some experts from current assessor pool
 - Using many of our existing Accreditation Council
 - Using many of our existing Criteria Council

Program Development-Expansion

- Modeled after existing programs
 - Baseline accreditation requirements-international
 - ISO/IEC 17011 framework/processes
 - Use of the same A2LA infrastructure
 - database tools
 - record systems
 - document control system

Program Development continued

- International interaction
 - we did not work in isolation
 - RMP workshops
 - seminars/committees
- Relied on external technical consultation
 - statistical expertise
- Industry input
 - Board of Director representation

A2LA Conclaves

- Annual Association meeting
- Provides opportunity:
 - to have updates on instructions/policies/practices
 - for assessors to share experiences that occurred
 - to take steps to ensure consistency in assessments
 - to have an exchange of ideas for improvements

A2LA Conclaves continued

- New assessor training
- Renewal assessor / staff training
- Technical Advisory Committees meet
- Accreditation Council meets face-to-face
- Criteria Council meets face-to-face

Program Development-Conclaves

- 2004 Assessor PT Provider Training
- 2006 and 2007 special PT Provider meetings
- 2007 Assessor RMP Assessment Training
- 2008 PT Provider Assessor Training
- 2008 FIRST PTP Technical Advisory Comm
- 2008 FIRST RMP Technical Advisory Comm

Assessor Training

- Program Criteria
 - International Standards (ILAC G13 ISO Guide 34)
 - A2LA Requirements/Policies
- Application of International Standard
 - How we apply the requirements
- Assessment tools
 - assessor checklists, forms, reporting, practices

Assessor Training continued

- Training was crucial for these programs
- Different aspects than assessing laboratories
- RMP-ISO Guide 34 requirements
 - Stressed the linkages to ISO Guide 35
 - Contents of Certificates to ISO Guide 31
 - Discussed approaches to integrating these standards
 - Use of assessment forms to ensure consistency

Assessor Training continued

- Assessing use of sub-contractors/collaborators
 - how were they qualified?
 - Was the qualification criteria adequate?
 - If not--then what does the AB do?
- Exercise on establishing an assessment agenda

A2LA PT Provider Program

- Two tiered program
 - A2LA Traditional ILAC Program
 - NELAC Program

Traditional Program

- Based on ILAC G13 : 2007
- Operates on a four year accreditation cycle
 - Full initial assessment
 - 2nd year surveillance assessment
 - 3rd year annual review and PT data review
 - 4th year renewal assessment

Traditional Program continued

- Assessment team-different make-up then labs
 - technical assessor and statistician
- Assessment criteria includes:
 - ILAC G13:2007
 - A2LA Advertising Policy
 - A2LA Traceability Policy
 - PTP own management system requirements

Traditional Program Continued

- Accreditation process essentially the same
 - Onsite assessment and report issued
 - Same corrective action response process
 - Same corrective action review process
- Annual review process modified
 - Review internal audits and management review
 - Organization Structure
 - PT scheme data review for those programs operated

NELAC PTP Program

- National Environmental Lab Accreditation Conference
 - NELAC now called The Nelac Institute (TNI)
- 14 US States formed to create program to accredit env labs
 - To facilitate reciprocity between states and consistency in regulations
- Requires labs to participate in proficiency testing
 - Labs participate 2 times a year for entire Scope contents
 - Must use an A2LA Accredited PT Provider
- A2LA is exclusively recognized to provide this accreditation
 - We are the TNI PTPA PTOB

PTPA PTOB?

- Proficiency Testing Provider Accreditor
 - Operates on a 2 year accreditation cycle
- Proficiency Testing Oversight Body
 - Ongoing monitoring
- Currently 8 PT Providers Accredited
 - Processing renewals currently
- Very Comprehensive Scopes of Accreditation

Assessment Teams

- Assessment teams composed of
 - 3 or 4 assessors due to comprehensive scopes
 - technical assessors and statistician

Assessment Criteria

- ILAC G 13:2007 and A2LA Policies
- Relevant parts of ISO Guide 34, 17025
- Additional Program Requirements
 - NELAC Chapter 5 and Chapter 2
- US EPA Criteria Document for Drinking Water
- Five Assessor Checklists!!!

Accreditation Process

- Annual review process similar
 - Internal Audits
 - Management Reviews
 - Organizational Structure Changes

Accreditation Process continued

- Proficiency Testing Oversight Body functions:
 - PT Provider submits study data to us prior to release
 - Homogeneity, stability
 - PT Provider submits data to us following study
 - number of participants
 - results-pass / fail rates
 - Our statistician reviews study data
 - Independent database created strictly for this process

Challenges

- TNI requested a first class
 - We had to assess, process, and accredit all at once
 - Comprehensive scopes of accreditation
- Oversight role and creation of database
 - This was new-start from the beginning

Summary / Key Points

- Assessor and staff training-ongoing
- Do not work in isolation
- Clear forms and instructions
 - for implementation, consistency, collections of data
- Effective communications-staff and assessors
- Effective and efficient assessor documents

THANK YOU!!!

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