

## ILAC Updates Policy for Uncertainty in Calibration

In an effort to harmonize the expression of measurement uncertainty (MU) on calibration certificates and calibration and measurement capability (CMC) in scopes of accreditation, the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) published policy document P14, ILAC Policy for Uncertainty in Calibration in November 2010. Compliance with this new policy is a requirement for all ILAC Arrangement signatory accreditation bodies and their accredited calibration laboratories.

P14 requires all accreditation bodies that are full members of the ILAC multilateral recognition arrangement (MRA) to ensure their accredited calibration laboratories estimate MU for all calibrations and measurements covered by the scope of accreditation. This estimation will be in compliance with the Guide to the Expression of Uncertainty in Measurement (GUM) and/or ISO Guide 35.

In accordance with the new ILAC policy, ACLASS will require that all line items on calibration scopes of accreditation be supported by uncertainty budgets by the first reassessment occurring on or after November 1, 2011. For applicant laboratories, this requirement applies to initial accreditation assessments occurring on or after that date.

For all CMC on scopes of accreditation, laboratories shall consider the following contributors to uncertainty, at a minimum:

- Uncertainty of the calibration of standards
- Original equipment manufacturer (OEM) accuracy specification of standards (unless drift studies have been done and can be produced)

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- Resolution of a "best available" unit under test
- Resolution of standards, as applicable
- Repeatability, where feasible (repeatability studies must be available for review)
- Environmental factors

If a particular contributor is found to be insignificant, the accredited laboratory must document the rationale for review in future assessments. When introducing OEM accuracy specifications, laboratories must ensure the absolute values are used and that they are the same confidence level (approximately 95%) as other contributors. These are not consistently listed between manufacturers or even between standards produced by the same manufacturer. If in doubt, contact the OEM.



## ACLASS Participates in Dept. of Defense EDQW

This year's Department of Defense Environmental Data Quality Workshop (EDQW) was close to home for ACLASS. The workshop was held March 28-April 1 in Arlington, VA. The yearly event brings together those involved in the DoD Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP), including accreditation bodies, laboratories, and members of the environmental community.

The session provided a forum for networking and included technical training sessions and presentations, in addition to reviews of the DoD ELAP. ACLASS had the opportunity to provide feedback regarding its involvement in the program during the past year and offer insight into possible program improvements.

The EDQW is open to all environmental professionals interested in learning more about the environmental sector and the DoD ELAP. For requirements for DoD ELAP accreditation, visit [www.aiclasscorp.com](http://www.aiclasscorp.com).

## Labs Invited to Participate in HSF Mark Testing

All ACLASS-accredited laboratories are invited to participate in the Hazardous Substance Free (HSF) Mark™ Consortium testing activities and help define how to manage the testing process.

Since the ECC Corp. launched the IEC IECQ Hazardous Substance Process Management (HSPM) standard and certification program four years ago, approximately 2,700 manufacturing facilities worldwide have implemented HSPM systems and undergone certification.

The HSF Mark, developed exclusively for IECQ HSPM certified companies, can be used on product packaging and marketing materials to indicate to consumers and business-to-business buyers that the product was manufactured in a facility that has demonstrated the knowledge and controls necessary to assure compliance with the demand for hazardous substance free products.

To ensure the integrity and proper use of the HSF Mark, each country designates a single organization to manage independent HSF testing of products sold locally. The ECC Corp. manages the HSF Mark program in the United States. All products will be listed on the HSF Mark website with detailed information related to compliance.

“Essentially, the HSF Mark will signify that products have been manufactured under the control of a quality management system certified compliant with IECQ QC 080000,” Keith Greenaway, ACLASS vice president, said. “Labs that participate in this program will be engaged by ECC Corp. to test off-the-shelf products for hazardous substances and validate the manufacturers’ claims that the products are hazardous substance free.”

The customer of the lab is not the product manufacturer, as ECC Corp. pays the lab for the test and purchase of the product. The eventual goal is to test 140 million products per year. The initial phase will include electrical and electronic-related materials, including packaging, where labs will test components

and products to determine if hazardous substances (lead, cadmium, mercury, etc.) exist.

For more information on becoming an HSF Mark testing lab, send e-mail to [christina.clark@ecc-corp.org](mailto:christina.clark@ecc-corp.org) or call 541-847-0644.



## NEFAP Evaluator Training

In February, two ACLASS accreditation managers attended training for individuals who will serve as peer evaluators to assure good practices in the National Environmental Field Activities Program (NEFAP).

The NELAC Institute (TNI) established NEFAP to implement an accreditation program for field sampling and measurement organizations (FSMOs).

The program has not yet officially begun, but TNI has drafted a two-volume accreditation standard for the program. One volume is for organizations seeking NEFAP accreditation and the other is for accreditation bodies that manage the accreditation process for these organizations.

TNI Standard Volume I, the FSMO Competency Standard for field sampling and testing organizations, is the same international standard for fixed laboratories. TNI Standard Volume II is the FSMO Accreditation Body Requirements to Accredite FSMOs, and it's based on ISO/IEC 17011, Conformity assessment - General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies.

ACLASS is the first accreditation body to seek TNI approval to perform NEFAP accreditations. The NEFAP Executive committee has not yet made an announcement with regard to approving accreditation bodies in the program. Regular NEFAP updates will be provided in future editions of this newsletter.

## **New Forms for Internal Proficiency Testing Programs**

The aim of mutual recognition is just that: mutual recognition. In the ISO/IEC 17025 world, it's about having confidence that other laboratories you may deal with have capabilities you can trust. You feel comfortable using these laboratories because they've gone through the same rigorous accreditation processes you've gone through. You're assured their management system and processes have been evaluated. You're confident their test and calibration processes have been witnessed by assessors with the expertise in the appropriate fields of test and calibration. The international community, however, wants added assurance.

The international community places a great deal of emphasis on proficiency testing (PT) as a means of monitoring a laboratory's ability to perform accurate test and calibration measurements. It is a means of tying everything together, a measure of all the elements of section five of ISO/IEC 17025, and an indicator that training, environmental controls, methods, uncertainty, equipment, traceability, handling, and reporting are all working together.

Some laboratories may choose an alternative to established commercial PT programs. They may organize their own internal proficiency testing as a cost-saving measure or because commercial tests are either not available or not relevant. This may be an acceptable practice in many cases. There are other cases, however, in which the PT does not prove an effective indicator of the quality of a test or calibration. When analyzed, these tests may yield scores very near zero. You don't get the information you need as a manager, and we don't get information that helps boost confidence in the international community.

To get more meaningful PT results, ACLASS will require submission of a written procedure for all internal PT program plans for accredited laboratories. Your procedure must include all applicable requirements of ISO/IEC 17043, outlined in ACLASS Guidance on Proficiency Testing/Inter-Laboratory Comparison PT/ILC Requirements. You'll also need to fill out form 40, Internal PT Compliance Checklist, a checklist with all necessary requirements. These documents are available online or from your accreditation manager. You'll receive written notification from an accreditation manager of the plan acceptance.

Please submit your internal PT plans to these accreditation managers: Geneva Bowman, ext. 205, [gbowman@anab-aclass.org](mailto:gbowman@anab-aclass.org); Terry Burgess, ext. 225, [tburgess@anab-aclass.org](mailto:tburgess@anab-aclass.org); or Mike Weisrock, ext. 227, [mweisrock@anab-aclass.org](mailto:mweisrock@anab-aclass.org).

This approval requirement will take effect July 1, 2011, after which assessors will review records of internal PT approval by an ACLASS accreditation manager. If the internal plan has not been approved, a minor nonconformance must be written. The necessary corrective action will need to include an approved plan. Between now and July 1, an opportunity for improvement will be issued if this is not in place.

Please contact any of the accreditation managers above with any questions.



*Supporting the work of regulators*

### **World Accreditation Day 2100**

World Accreditation Day will be celebrated June 9, 2011. The International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and International Accreditation Forum (IAF) have produced a video on the value of accreditation. Links to the video and World Accreditation Day posters are available at [www.aiclasscorp.com](http://www.aiclasscorp.com).

## Will Food Scares Be Yesterday's News?

Food recalls across the United States seemed to be everyday news last year. Eggs, beef, tuna, lettuce and alfalfa sprouts—just to name a few—were all recalled at one time or another for a variety of reasons.

This year, lawmakers hope new legislation will eventually make food recalls rare news events. Four days into 2011, President Obama signed the Food Safety Modernization Act into law, marking the first overhaul of the U.S. food safety infrastructure in nearly 75 years.

“It is a major step toward improving how the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) protects people from preventable illnesses that sicken millions and kill thousands of Americans every year,” said Erik Olson, the Pew Health Group’s director of food and consumer product safety.

The new law works to improve food safety through six means: mandatory recalls; focus on the biggest risks; mandatory inspections; access to records; more control over imports; and preventive controls.

**“To have a truly effective food safety system, we must have a level of oversight that works in partnership and supports the role of the FDA to provide confidence in the lifecycle of the product.”**

The legislation gives the FDA the authority to issue its own recalls of contaminated products, along with increased access to manufacturer records in the case of emergencies.

“It shifts the paradigm,” said Bill Hubbard, a former FDA associate commissioner. In the past, the FDA has played the role of police officer, only tracking down trouble when problems arose. The new law creates “a new system in which government and food processors work together to keep contamination from ever occurring in the first place,” Hubbard said.

John Surak, an ASQ fellow and a food safety expert, said it’s estimated the FDA will take up to three years to fully implement all of the act’s provisions.

“Food professionals need to keep vigilant on the actual details of the Food Safety Modernization Act and how the FDA will interpret the act and promulgate the new regulations,” Surak said.

The legislation will also allow third-party testing to ensure FDA-regulated products meet the standards set by the agency. ASQ, through the ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board, has been active in educating legislators and FDA officials of the importance of accredited third-party conformity assessment with oversight.

ASQ, through its Public Policy Advisory Committee (PPAC), and ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board will continue to work with Congress through the appropriations process, making certain the already established international standards are recognized as the regulations through which the new law will be enforced.

“To have a truly effective food safety system in the United States, we must have a level of oversight that works in partnership and supports the role of the FDA to provide confidence in the entire lifecycle of the product,” said Keith Greenaway, vice president of ACLASS and a PPAC member. ACLASS is one of two brands of the ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board.

According to Greenaway, the best way to achieve this type of system is through accredited third-party conformity assessment services with oversight through which “an independent party verifies and provides written assurance of conformance to internationally recognized standards.”

This type of third-party provider includes laboratories, inspection bodies, management systems certification bodies, product certification bodies and personnel certification bodies.

Accredited third-party conformity assessment is founded on international standards and focuses on building and operating well-defined and repeatable processes, and ensuring accurate and reliable test results.

*This article appeared in the February 2011 issue of Quality Progress magazine.*



## **ANSI Releases Schedule for World Standards Week 2011**

ANSI has announced a full schedule of events for World Standards Week (WSW) 2011. An annual event where members of the standards and conformity assessment community come together in the spirit of cooperation and collaboration, WSW will be held October 11-14. In addition to the U.S.-oriented ANSI member meetings, this year's events will include special guests from the European Union in discussions focused on the topic of transatlantic partner-

ships. The schedule is at [http://www.ansi.org/meetings\\_events/wsw11/wsw.aspx?menuid=8](http://www.ansi.org/meetings_events/wsw11/wsw.aspx?menuid=8).

## **Energy Management Standard Expected in 2011**

The international standard for energy management, ISO 50001, will help organizations improve their energy performance, increase energy efficiency, and reduce climate change impacts. For more information, go to <http://www.iso.org/iso/pressrelease.htm?refid=Ref1399>.

## **ANSI to Facilitate Development of Standardization Roadmap for Electric Vehicles**

ANSI will form an Electric Vehicles Standards Panel (EVSP) to enable the safe, mass deployment of electric vehicles and associated infrastructure in the United States. For more information on the EVSP, go to [https://www.ansi.org/news\\_publications/news\\_story.aspx?admin=1&articleid=2820&source=whatsnew031411](https://www.ansi.org/news_publications/news_story.aspx?admin=1&articleid=2820&source=whatsnew031411).

## **Standards Wars: Myth or Reality?**

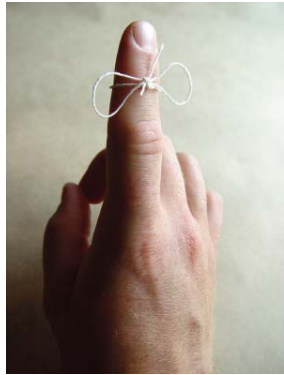
Is there such a thing as too many standards? When multiple standards and conformance solutions are available, how can a company, organization, or government agency choose the best option for its needs?

These and other questions surrounding the forces of competition, convergence, and coordination have been hotly debated within the standards and conformance community for years. ANSI will host a free, interactive workshop to address these issues in an open, robust dialog.

Standards Wars: Myth or Reality will be held May 12, 2011, at the Grand Hyatt Washington, 1000 H Street NW, Washington, DC 20001. To learn more or to register to attend, visit [www.ansi.org/standardswars](http://www.ansi.org/standardswars).

### **Names You Trust, Accreditation Services You Need**





## Don't Forget ACLASS for Your Training Needs

### ISO/IEC 17025 Internal Auditing

May 2-4, 2011, Charlotte, NC

Cost: ASQ member \$850, non-ASQ member \$950 (For those registering to attend ISO/IEC 17025 Internal Auditing and Practical Measurement Uncertainty in Charlotte, NC: ASQ member \$1642.50, non-ASQ member \$1,845)

### Practical Measurement Uncertainty: Hands-On Training for Calibration and Testing Measurement Uncertainty

May 4-6, 2011, Charlotte, NC

Cost: ASQ member \$975, non-ASQ member \$1,100 (For those registering to attend ISO/IEC 17025 Internal Auditing and Practical Measurement Uncertainty

in Charlotte, NC: ASQ member \$1642.50, non-ASQ member \$1,845)

### iNARTE Certified Laboratory Auditor (iNCLA) Training

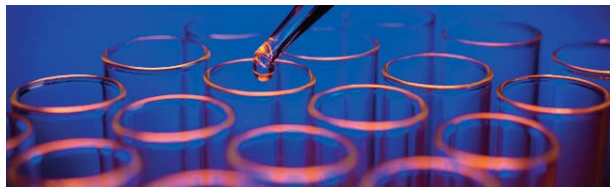
May 17-20, 2011, Alexandria, VA

Cost: \$1,450

### ISO/IEC 17025 Internal Auditing

June 15-17, 2011, Milwaukee, WI

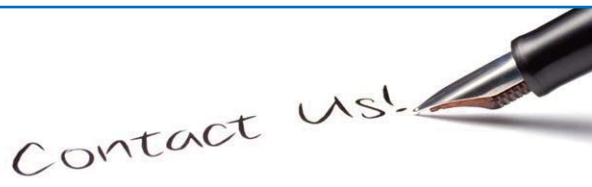
Cost: ASQ member \$850, non-ASQ member \$950



## AClass Assessor Training

In February, ACLASS held its third assessor orientation and training session in six months. ACLASS continues to be pleased to accept and work with talented and skilled technical assessors. At the session, the new assessors learned detailed information about accreditation processes, documentation and record requirements, and full training on the database ACLASS uses to manage many aspects of its operations.

AClass held its annual professional development session for all assessors in April. The week-long session helps ensure consistent knowledge and practices. The ACLASS Accreditation Council also met in conjunction with the professional development session.



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