

## Summary of

### A2LA Annual Meeting of the Members

Sheraton Inn, Columbia, MD

March 14, 2005

8:00 A.M. to 10:00 A.M.

#### 1) Welcome and Introductions:

Dr. William Kavanagh, Chairman of the A2LA Board of Directors, opened the meeting at 8:05 A.M. and welcomed the attendees.

#### 2) Status of A2LA Activities: (Attachment 1)

Dr. Kavanagh acknowledged the laboratory representatives' participation in this year's conclave. The Board of Directors (BOD) members in attendance introduced themselves and briefly described their backgrounds so the members could get a grasp of the BOD expertise. He complimented the committee chairs on their professionalism in conducting the meetings held during the conclave. He also described pending actions to take place within the BOD in accordance with *Boards That Make a Difference* by John Carver, and he stressed the A2LA policy for performing accreditation with ethical and prudent actions. The goals of the A2LA Strategic Plan were discussed. He explained that A2LA has 1723 laboratories accredited and 131 in the system; 2004 was a good year for A2LA, and A2LA is economically healthy. The responsibilities of the Accreditation Council (AC) and Criteria Council (CC) were described. He complimented the relationships of staff, contractors, and volunteers who support A2LA. He commended A2LA on the acknowledgment given to the assessors for their years of service at this year's conclave and suggested that an acknowledgement for a special laboratory be considered next year.

#### 3) Report of the Criteria Council (CC): (Attachment 2)

Ken Stoub, CC chairman, reported on the outcome of the CC meeting during this conclave. The role and responsibilities of the CC were described. The CC approves A2LA policies and requirements and provides guidance to staff. The Chairs of each advisory committee were noted. The activities of each advisory committee were summarized. Measurement uncertainty is a topic for each advisory committee.

The Construction Materials Advisory Committee is concerned with nuclear gage traceability and acceptance of A2LA accreditation from the Army Corps of Engineers.

The EMAC is working on improving traceability terms, developing more detail on proficiency testing (PT) and scope format, and a bylaws change.

Life Sciences Advisory Committee discussed the A2LA *Traceability Policy* as it relates to its disciplines, stack gas testing, and PT program requirements specific to the chemical field.

Materials Testing Advisory Committee elected Fred Fetterolf as the new Chairman, addressed accreditation requirements for coordinate measurement machines, and discussed Charpy testing traceability.

The Measurement Advisory Committee looked at updates to the calibration program requirements, bylaws changes, uncertainty record keeping, and hardness calibration guidance.

Mr. Stoub summarized the remaining issues from the CC meeting. The CC members need to know which A2LA documents will be part of the CC's scope of work. All policy decisions must come to the CC – this is not happening consistently. The A2LA meeting minutes preparation procedure concerning content and publication will be reviewed. The level of CC members' participation on ballot issues was discussed. Document control of A2LA policies and procedures needs improvement. The issues surrounding violations of the A2LA Advertising Policy ("use of the logo") were also discussed. The CC expects to see policies or requirements on definitions, a PT provider report checklist and a glossary of terms and will vote on expected changes to the *Traceability Policy*, *Measurement Uncertainty for Testing Laboratories Annexes*, and advisory committee bylaws.

#### 4) Report of the Accreditation Council (AC): (Attachment 3)

Alex Klein, the new AC chairman, reported and recognized Mr. Doug Lentz's service as AC Chair for the last ten years. The AC members in attendance were acknowledged. There are 59 AC members. Turn around rate was 11.7 days (target is 15 days) in 2004 and that met client needs but the quality of review of packages remains high. Seventy eight percent of the AC members meet the target. High achievers for turnaround time and numbers of packages reviewed were noted. There were a total of 1521 packages reviewed by the AC last year and number of activities equates to about one full time person. In the meeting during the conclave, the AC determined that checklists do not need to go to the AC and discussed including the ballot in the email notice that an AC package is coming to an AC member.

#### 5) Report on Laboratory Services Staff Activities: (Attachment 4)

Trace McInturff reported on staff activities. The Laboratory Services staff were acknowledged and they introduced themselves. Trace described staff attrition and changes made to compensate. Tim Rasinski replaced Tim Osborne; Tiffany White and Liz Smith joined the calibration program; Mike Hart came on board for the mechanical program; life sciences added Atefeh Fathi so now each Lab Services Officer will handle the proficiency testing for each of his/her laboratories. Steve Medellin described the new A2LA Inspection Body Accreditation Program and indicated that he is hearing from interested potential applicants for inspection body accreditation. More opportunities in the aerospace area are coming. The calibration and electrical fields grew fastest in the past year. The number of accreditation applicants received in 2004 exceeded budget predictions.

6) Report of the President: (Attachment 5)

Phil Smith introduced himself as the new A2LA Business Development Manager and described his program of activities. Peter Unger, A2LA President, introduced the A2LA administrative staff and A2LA legal counsel, Jim Hostetler.

The impact on A2LA and its accredited laboratories due to the amendments to ISO/IEC 17025 were reviewed. The new definition of the term “accreditation” found in ISO 17000 was discussed. The definition prescribes “3<sup>rd</sup> party attestation” and does not include calibration laboratories or PT providers in the definition for “conformity assessment” but ISO 17011 does include them. The requirements of ISO/IEC 17011 require (a) balanced representation at the policy level and advisory committee level; (b) that accreditation bodies be third party entities; (c) all participants in accreditation activities be identified; (d) stronger impartiality requirements; (e) more prescriptive quality management requirements; (f) more prescriptive assessor training and monitoring; (g) staff and committee member details; (h) more prescriptive surveillance program; and (i) stronger provisions for decision making on accreditation.

Mr. Unger described the outcome of an A2LA survey on the benefits of the mutual recognition arrangements (MRA). General support of involvement was received from those surveyed. The decision to withdraw from the NACLA MRA for lack of enforcement of the MRA was discussed. The A2LA staff’s international involvements - International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC), Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC), European cooperation for Accreditation (EA), and the Inter American Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC) were reviewed.

In response to a query about the perceived lack of technical depth of calibration knowledge in the staff at the A2LA office, Mr. Unger responded that A2LA uses the services of its highly qualified contractors to fill this void.

Dr. Kavanagh closed the meeting with special thanks to all of those supporting A2LA’s activities.

The Annual Meeting of the Members adjourned at 9:40 A.M.

*Meeting summary prepared by Roxanne Robinson, Vice President.*