



ANNUAL MEETING

All interested parties are welcome to attend A2LA's 2001 Annual Meeting, which will be held on Monday, April 23, at the Sheraton Columbia Hotel, in Columbia, MD. Additional details will be included in the next issue of *A2LA News*, to be published during the first quarter of 2001. Make your plans now to attend.

A2LA SIGNS INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENT TO ENHANCE TRADE

In a development that will enhance international trade, 36 laboratory accreditation bodies from 28 economies worldwide signed an arrangement on November 2 that will promote the acceptance of technical test and calibration data for exported goods. The Arrangement was signed at the General Assembly of the International Laboratory

Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and enters into force on January 31, 2001. A2LA was one of three U.S. signatory bodies.

This means that a product tested by a laboratory accredited by a signatory to the Arrangement in one country will be accepted and promoted by all the other signatories in their countries. This is a major

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A2LA ONE OF THREE SIGNATORIES OF NACLA MRA

On September 29, A2LA became one of the first three accrediting bodies (ABs) recognized by The National Cooperation for Laboratory Accreditation (NACLA), when representatives of the three ABs signed the NACLA mutual recognition arrangement (MRA). Pete Unger, President, signed for A2LA. The other two signatory bodies are NVLAP and ICBO Evaluation Service.

NACLA is the private-sector, nonprofit voluntary organization whose mission is to coordinate U.S. laboratory accreditation by granting recognition to competent ABs.

The basis for NACLA recognition is a three-step process: Careful review of the AB's documents and procedures; a thorough on-site evaluation by a team of NACLA

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TRADE ARRANGEMENT

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step towards reducing or eliminating the need for retesting of products when they arrive in an importing country.

“The ILAC Arrangement will provide a technical underpinning to international trade by promoting cross-border stakeholder confidence and acceptance of accredited laboratory data,” emphasized Peter S. Unger, President of A2LA, and Chairman of the ILAC Arrangement Management Committee. “Until now, there has been no international mutual recognition agreement in lab accreditation, which has been a hindrance for some types of international trade.”

“For many years, the retesting of goods by an importing country has been considered a major technical barrier to trade,” noted Belinda Collins, Chair of ILAC and Director of the Office of Standards Services at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). “Since the mid-1970s, the World Trade Organization has identified such technical barriers as a major concern to world trade. Such barriers can not only add significantly to the cost of goods entering a country, but they can delay and in some cases prevent the goods from being accepted by foreign markets.

“ILAC has been working to overcome these technical barriers for the last two decades by encouraging the development of regional recognition arrangements culminating in today’s global recognition arrangement among representative bodies in each country,” added Dr. Collins. “This will facilitate the acceptance of goods already tested by an accredited laboratory. Thus, goods tested in one

country should enjoy easier access to foreign markets participating in the Arrangement.”

The key to the Arrangement is the developing global network of accredited testing and calibration laboratories that are evaluated and recognized as being competent by specific authorities known as laboratory accreditation bodies. Many of these bodies, which are located in many economies, participate in ILAC. The ILAC Arrangement applies to the 36 signatory members of ILAC, which consists of accreditation bodies that have been evaluated and shown to meet ILAC’s criteria for competence. A key ILAC goal is to have all its members meet the criteria to become signatories to the Arrangement, as well as to provide outreach to those bodies that are in the process of becoming ILAC members.

Accreditation bodies from the following economies will participate in the Arrangement:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Australia | Japan |
| Belgium | Republic of Korea |
| Brazil | Netherlands |
| Canada | New Zealand |
| People’s Republic of China | Norway |
| Czech Republic | Singapore |
| Denmark | South Africa |
| Finland | Spain |
| France | Sweden |
| Germany | Switzerland |
| Hong Kong, China | Chinese Taipei |
| India | United Kingdom |
| Ireland | United States of America |
| Italy | Vietnam |

The other U.S. accreditation bodies that signed the Arrangement are NVLAP and ICBO ES (International Conference of Building Officials Evaluation Service.)

A cornerstone of the new Arrangement is the utilization of existing or developing regional arrangements established in the Americas, the Asia-Pacific region, Europe and Southern Africa. The bodies participating in these regional arrangements are responsible for maintaining the necessary confidence in the competence of their member accreditation bodies that are signatories to the new ILAC Arrangement.

“This is an important change for the laboratories and their customers, who faced a patchwork of arrangements involving some countries but not others,” affirmed David Stanger, a member of the Board of Governors of the Union Internationale des Laboratoires Independantes (UILI), head of its delegation to ILAC 2000 and Chairman of the ILAC Laboratory Liaison Committee. “Indeed, it comes down to the fact that manufacturers and exporters using labs in one country can look forward to greater ease in trading, since the accreditation bodies in countries importing products tested in the export country labs will accept the test results as equivalent to theirs and will encourage companies in their countries to also accept the results.”

“Now that the Arrangement is in place, the next crucial step is for governments to take advantage of this Arrangement by using it to

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NEW BOARD, ACCREDITATION AND CRITERIA COUNCIL MEMBERS APPROVED

Two new members of the A2LA Board of Directors were seated at the Board's October 20 meeting. The Board also approved the addition of a number of new individuals to two important A2LA bodies: the Criteria Council and the Accreditation Council.

The new Board Members are:

Ken Stoub (*Group Seven Environmental Services, Orange, CA*), new Chairman of the A2LA Criteria Council

Joe Greenslade (*Greenslade & Company, Forth Worth, TX*)

New Criteria Council Members are:

Dawn Mettler (food)
Rockbridge Laboratory Services, Rockbridge, OH

Marcus Nachman (calibration)
NPS, Inc., Virginia Beach, VA

James Scott (environmental, chemical, food and radiochemistry)
Scott Consulting Services, Acworth, GA

Chris Wackrow (mechanical, chemical, and metals)
MNP Corporation, Technical and Research Services, Utica, MI

New Accreditation Council Members are:

Charles Ellis (calibration)
National Association for Proficiency Testing, Golden Valley, MN

Mark Gerfin (calibration)
Cannon Instrument Company, State College, PA

Terri Lamsdale (calibration)
Lamsco Consultants, Dayton, OH

Dawn Mettler (food)
Rockbridge Laboratory Services, Rockbridge, OH

Laura Moss-Williams (calibration)
Consultant, Tipp City, OH

Marcus Nachman (calibration)
NPS, Inc., Virginia Beach, VA

A2LA's Criteria Council reviews and approves technical criteria documents. The Accreditation Council reviews assessment reports provided by A2LA staff and assessors and decides whether to grant, deny, or withdraw accreditation. We welcome all new Board and Council members and look forward to working with all of you.

A2LA ONE OF THREE SIGNATORIES OF NACLA MRA *(continued from page 1)*

experts to determine the AB's compliance with NACLA procedures and the international standard for ABs (ISO/IEC 58); and review of the evaluation team's report and recommendation by a NACLA Acceptance Panel.

NACLA signatory ABs commit to the following:

- To use equivalent procedures in the accreditation of laboratories under ISO/IEC Guides 58 and 25 (17025);
- To recognize the test reports and calibration certificates issued by testing and calibration laboratories accredited by other signatory bodies as being technically equivalent;
- To promote the acceptance by all users of test reports and calibration certificates issued by their accredited testing and calibration laboratories;
- To investigate all complaints resulting from test reports and calibration certificates issued by their accredited testing and calibration laboratories;
- To inform the other signatories as soon as possible, through the NACLA Secretariat, of any significant changes that have occurred or will occur in the status and/or operational practices of their accreditation body.

A2LA has been an extremely active member of NACLA since its founding three years ago. Roxanne Robinson is currently a member of the group's Board of Directors, and Pete Unger is Chair of the Training Committee.

A2LA ACCREDITS FIRST REFERENCE MATERIAL PRODUCER

The Bethlehem Steel Corporation, Homer Research Laboratories, located in Bethlehem, PA has just been recognized as A2LA's first accredited Reference Material Provider. A2LA assessors conducted the onsite assessment of the Bethlehem Steel facilities on October 3 through October 5 and accreditation was granted November 7, 2000. The scope of accreditation includes production of the following types of reference materials and certified reference materials: carbon steel, low alloy steel, zinc alloys, and zinc coated sheet metal. Although Bethlehem does not actively market its materials outside of the company, it does supply materials to some non-Bethlehem laboratories where existing inventories meet the demand without risking Bethlehem's internal needs.

Under the new program, Reference Material Producers are assessed to ISO/IEC Guide 34-2000, "General Requirements for the Competence of Reference Material Producers". Guide 34 consists of requirements for the quality system including: organization and management, document and information control, contract review, use of collaborators, client feedback, procedures for corrective action and preventive action, internal audits and management reviews. Technical requirements and production requirements under Guide 34 include: collaborator review, production planning, production control, environment, material handling and storage, assessment of homogeneity and stability, measurement methods and equipment, traceability and validation, data evaluation, characterization, assignment of

property values and their uncertainty, and certificates.

Bethlehem Steel Corporation, Homer Research Laboratories was also one of the first A2LA laboratories accredited to the new

ISO/IEC 17025 requirements.

For information on accreditation for Reference Material Producers, please contact Randall Querry at A2LA at (301) 644-3221 or at rquerry@a2la.org.

ILAC 2000

Laboratory accreditation officials and stakeholders from 61 different economies assembled in Arlington, VA, in early November to participate in ILAC 2000 and to witness history: the signing of the ILAC mutual recognition arrangement by A2LA and 35 other accrediting bodies from all corners of the globe. (See related article on front cover.) The signing was the culmination of 23 years of work, which began in 1977 when ILAC held its first meeting in Copenhagen.

As cameras flashed and champagne glasses were raised, the U.S. architect of ILAC looked on from a quiet corner of the ballroom. Dr. Howard Forman, a former Commerce Dept. official and a former member of the A2LA Board of Directors, recalled the Copenhagen meeting and observed the signing ceremony with an extra measure of satisfaction.

The festive signing ceremony was but one of the many activities that occupied the 325 ILAC 2000 attendees throughout the week of the conference. There were three days of technical sessions covering such relevant topics as: ISO/IEC 17025, the new laboratory accreditation standard; stakeholder reliance on accredited laboratories; proficiency testing; uncertainty and traceability; international trade aspects of accreditation; and developing new accreditation systems.

Then, member-body representatives addressed a myriad of accreditation issues in day-long committee meetings and in three days of General Assembly gatherings. The range of subjects that emerged from committees for discussion on the assembly floor demonstrates that the dynamic world of accreditation will keep ILAC busy for at least the next 23 years. They include: ILAC relations with the International Accreditation Forum (IAF); changes to the ILAC operational guidelines and bylaws; establishment of a permanent secretariat; policies on impartiality requirements and traceability of measurements; evaluator training; evaluators' use of key performance indicators (KPIs); development of harmonized documents between ILAC and the regional cooperations (EA, APLAC, IAAC); and assistance to developing countries.

During the opening General Assembly there were two events of note. One was a ceremonial reenactment of the September 29 signing of the National Cooperation for Laboratory Accreditation's (NACLA) MRA by A2LA's Pete Unger and the officials of the other two NACLA-recognized accrediting bodies, ICBO

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ILAC 2000

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Evaluation Services and NVLAP (details in related article in this newsletter). The other was the signing of an MOU between ILAC, ISO and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), under which UNIDO will fund an ILAC initiative to train accrediting bodies in selected developing economies so as to prepare them for entry into the ILAC Arrangement.

The ILAC 2001 Officers and Executive Committee were elected at the closing General Assembly. They are: Mike Peet of SANAS (South Africa), Chair; Daniel Pierre, COFRAC (France), Vice Chair; Hans-Ulrich Mittman, DAR (Germany), Chair of the Accreditation Policy Committee; Peter van de Leemput, RvA (The Netherlands), Chair of the Technical Accreditation Issues Committee; Paul Davies, NATA (Australia), Chair of the Public Affairs Committee; Pete Unger, A2LA, Chair of the Arrangement Management Committee; and Hanspeter Ischi, SAS (Switzerland), Convenor of the Finance and Audit Committee. (The other two members of the Executive Committee are Dr. Belinda Collins, representing NIST, Immediate Past-Chair; and David Stanger, Chair of the Laboratory Liaison Committee.)

When not in meetings, the ILAC delegates enjoyed some of the special attractions of our nation's capital: a dinner cruise on the Potomac River; the National Symphony and dinner at the Kennedy Center; an evening in Old Town Alexandria; and tours of local laboratories.

Their next stops: Kyoto, Japan, next fall, for the ILAC 2001 General Assembly; and Berlin, in the fall of 2002, for the ILAC General Assembly and Conference.

A2LA AND ILAC

The longstanding prominence of A2LA within the International Cooperation for Laboratory Cooperation (ILAC) was evident throughout the planning and presentation of ILAC 2000, including the culmination of the conference – the historic signing of the ILAC Arrangement.

- The Planning Committee was chaired by John Locke, former A2LA President. The core committee of active members included three current A2LA officials: Pete Unger, President; Roxanne Robinson, Vice President; and Ramona Saar, Quality Manager.
- Once ILAC 2000 began – with an A2LA-sponsored reception on the evening of October 29 – a number of A2LA staff members worked behind the scenes with other volunteers to ensure a smooth-running event. Important contributions were made by Warren Merkel, Daren Valentine, and Berta Hakes.
- The excellent Technical Program had a distinct A2LA flavor. Pete Unger and Roxanne Robinson served as panelists at different sessions. Roxanne Robinson and Ramona Saar were coordinators of two of the six sessions. A large number of other A2LA volunteers participated in the program, including: Dean Flinchbaugh, A2LA Board member; Don Martin, A2LA Measurement Advisory Committee Chairman; Mimi Uhlfelder, A2LA-accredited lab representative; and A2LA assessors John Knicely and Dan Tholen.
- Pete Unger chaired the meeting of the ILAC Arrangement Management Committee, participated in the several meetings of the Executive Committee and represented A2LA at the member-body conference table during General Assembly discussions.
- He also signed the historic ILAC Arrangement on behalf of A2LA.

A2LA's influence in ILAC won't diminish in the years ahead. Peter Unger is a member of the Executive Committee, Chair of the Arrangement Management Committee and a member of the Accreditation Policy Committee. Roxanne Robinson is a member of the Technical Accreditation Issues Committee, and Warren Merkel is a member of the ILAC Public Affairs Committee.

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METROLOGY CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN WASHINGTON, D.C. IN 2001

The Annual Workshop & Symposium of the National Conference of Standards Laboratories International (NCSLI) will be held in Washington DC in 2001. A2LA will be one of the 150 exhibitors at the trade show held in conjunction with the technical and business program.

The site of the July 29 to August 2 event will be the Washington Hilton and Towers. During the five days, a series of workshops, panel presentations and papers will address the meeting theme: "The New Economy: What Role will Metrology Play?"

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METROLOGY CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN WASHINGTON, D.C. IN 2001

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The theme reflects NCSLI's mission, which is to advance technical and managerial excellence in the field of metrology, measurement standards, instrument calibration and test and measurement. More than 1500 organizations from all parts of the world and a wide range of sectors (academic, scientific, industrial, commercial and governmental) belong to NCSLI.

Given this cosmopolitan membership, there will be ample opportunity at the 2001 conference to meet an interesting mix of measurement professionals and to learn about and discuss developments, problems and challenges within the dynamic international world of calibration and measurement sciences.

An added highlight of the conference will be celebration of two milestones in the measurement world: the 40th anniversary of NCSLI and the 100th anniversary of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

Additional information about NCSLI and its 2001 Workshop and Symposium can be found on the association's web site, www.ncslinternational.org.

NEW TRACEABILITY POLICY ISSUED

The "Calibration Accreditation Policy" and the "waiver form" process were formally replaced by the "Traceability Policy" on August 28, 2000. The new Traceability Policy continues to require that A2LA-accredited laboratories obtain accredited calibration reports from their calibration providers or obtain calibrations directly from a National Metrology Institute (NMI).

During the laboratory's on-site assessment, the Assessor will review the laboratory's calibration records and determine during the assessment if:

- a) the lab can demonstrate that the calibration was performed by our national metrology institute, NIST, or by another NMI; or
- b) the lab can demonstrate that the calibration was performed by an A2LA-accredited calibration lab or by a calibration lab that has been accredited by one of our MRA partners. (Assessors must see a calibration certificate with the accreditation body logo included, or which otherwise makes reference to its accredited status.)

If the conditions noted above are not met, the assessor is required to cite a deficiency.

The laboratory should respond to the deficiency with a corrective action outlining their plans to obtain accredited calibration services, or else with their justification for using the current calibration vendors. Laboratories are no longer required to complete the waiver form. A decision on the acceptability of the corrective action will be made by knowledgeable staff at A2LA and the

lab will be notified as to whether or not the response is deemed acceptable.

Since the formal "waiver form" process has been discontinued, the waiver forms will no longer be provided. Waiver forms currently in-house or received due to an assessment conducted before the process was phased out will be reviewed and processed as usual.

It should be noted that in previous memos to our assessor corps and to our accredited and applicant laboratories, we had outlined a plan wherein resolution of the deficiency would be agreed to by the assessor and the laboratory. In addition, this earlier plan allowed the assessor some latitude concerning whether or not the deficiency should be cited at all. However, some laboratories and assessors raised the issue of potential "assessor variability" in deciding whether or not a given non-accredited calibration provider was acceptable. In addition, as part of maintaining our status as a signatory to the APLAC and EA mutual recognition arrangements, A2LA must monitor the traceability status of our accredited laboratories. For these reasons, the initial plan was revised as noted above.

If you have any questions about the change of policy and procedure, any technical staff member should be able to answer your questions, or you can call Thomas Adams at (301) 644 3219 or contact him via email at tmadams@a2la.org.

Thank you for your patience during our transition period!

VEALE INTERVIEW

Ralph Veale holds a degree in education and, though his career has been spent outside the classroom, he's been teaching others for much of his life. Currently, as both a consultant and an A2LA assessor, he teaches laboratory staff how to improve their operation and measure up to the international standard of competence.

Following his graduation from Indiana State University, Ralph spent the next 40+ years in Government services. The first few were spent in the Air Force, where his specialty was meteorology. The next 37 years were spent with NBS/NIST, where he became an expert in metrology – dimensional metrology.

His penchant for teaching brought him into contact with A2LA about 10 years ago while he was still employed at NIST. Through his involvement with implementation of the Fastener Quality Act he met A2LA's Janneth Ignacio. Ralph invited Janneth to NIST, where he gave her a tutorial in measuring screw threads. He met Ramona Saar not long thereafter.

"As my retirement from NIST approached," Ralph recounts, "Ramona suggested I get involved with A2LA. For the first six months, I was a consultant to A2LA, helping them with their calibration accreditation program."

Before long, Ralph was an A2LA assessor as well. At first, he wanted nothing to do with the quality systems component of assessment, preferring to stick with the technical end of it. However, he soon realized that he'd have to broaden his portfolio in order to become a lead assessor.

"I was used to being in charge at NIST (he was Group Leader of the Dimensional Metrology Group for a number of years) and I decided I'd rather be a team leader than a team member. So I took a training course from Daren Valentine. I passed it, and

with some additional training, I was soon leading assessment teams."

Ralph played a part in A2LA getting recognized by EA (European Cooperation for Accreditation) by helping staff prepare for the first EA evaluation in the mid-1990s. Later, he was the lead assessor on one of the first calibration laboratory assessments that the EA evaluators observed.

Traveling is something Ralph does a lot of, whether by car, plane or bicycle. He biked to and from NIST every day, winter and summer. On several occasions he biked the entire length of the C&O Canal towpath, a distance of 184 miles. And he has much bigger ambitions for the future. "When I fully retire, I plan to ride my bike across the U.S."

In the meantime, Ralph has few spare moments. Besides his work for A2LA, he does some assessments for NVLAP, consults to laboratories, does some standards-related work for NIST, is Chair of the ASME Dimensional Metrology Committee, Subcommittee for Length, serves as Secretariat of ISO TC213 WG6 on Measuring Instruments, and has been a member of the Dimensional Metrology Experts Group of the EA. The latter two affiliations have necessitated trips to Berlin, Paris,



Vienna, Sydney and Helsinki, all of which he's enjoyed.

Does his wife Rita travel with him? Rarely. "She won't go on any trip longer than two hours. Actually, we don't have much in common. My interests are metrology and

history, especially the Revolutionary War in the South (his great great grandfather fought in that war). My wife is into arts and music, and while I have some interest in those subjects, I just don't feel I have much talent. Maybe that's why Rita and I have gotten along so well for 42 years – we have nothing to argue about."

What was his most difficult assessment?

"There has been a time or two when I didn't do my homework well. You should know the capabilities of a lab in advance of your assessment visit. I got there and the lab was a mess. It had rained and water had leaked into the lab. I had to tell the manager to get a new lab before they could be assessed. Another lab was in the middle of the manufacturing plant. Oil and grease all around."

What does he enjoy most?

"Consulting with lab people and helping them do things better. Then, coming back a year later and seeing the improvements. I get a great deal of enjoyment out of that."

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ELECTROMECHANICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE INITIATED

A2LA has established an Electromechanical Advisory Committee (EMAC) to provide the association with guidance in the electromechanical field of testing. The committee scope will include the development of accreditation guides for electrical product testing, covering the following technical areas: electrical, electromagnetic compatibility (EMC), product safety, telecommunications, environmental simulation and electromechanical (functional). In selecting projects, the EMAC will coordinate with other A2LA committees and with other organizations and individuals active in the electromechanical field,

so as to minimize duplication of efforts.

Michael Tedaldi has been appointed Chairman of the new committee. He holds a Master of Science Degree in Physics and has extensive experience as an EMC Engineer, Senior Quality Assurance Engineer, and Safety Engineer.

Participatory membership on the EMAC is open to all interested parties. For more information about EMAC membership, please contact Trace McInturff, A2LA Program Manager at tmcinturff@a2la.org.

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ISO/IEC 17025 TRANSITION UPDATE

The A2LA leadership has adopted a new policy directive and has published several new documents to further the organization's transition from the current international accreditation standard (ISO/IEC Guide 25) to the new one (ISO/IEC Standard 17025).

Policy Directive: As of January 1, 2001, A2LA will discontinue full on-site assessments against ISO/IEC Guide 25 only. Laboratories will have two options: either a full ISO/IEC 17025 assessment, or an ISO/IEC Guide 25 assessment with an ISO/IEC 17025 gap analysis. (Details of this new policy are included in the Transition Plan chart printed in this newsletter.)

New Documents: In September 2000, all accredited and applicant laboratories were provided with four new documents:

- **General Requirements for the Accreditation of Laboratories**
This "green booklet" contains the interpretive guidance for ISO/IEC 17025 only. The actual requirements of ISO/IEC 17025 are **not** contained in the document. Laboratories are now required to obtain their own copy of ISO/IEC 17025. A2LA's web site contains information on how to order the standard.
- **A2LA Policy on Measurement Traceability**
The "A2LA Policy on Measurement Traceability" replaces the Calibration Accreditation Policy and the Waiver Procedure, which have been removed from circulation. The policy contains new requirements that have been added to the ISO/IEC 17025 Assessor Checklist. Please refer to the related article in this edition of *A2LA News*.

- **Proficiency Testing (PT) Requirements for Accredited Testing and Calibration Laboratories**
The PT requirements for all fields of accreditation are printed in this new document. You are encouraged to review those sections relevant to your laboratory's field(s) of testing/calibration.
- **A2LA Interim Policy on Measurement Uncertainty for Testing Laboratories**
Under this interim policy, testing laboratories may respond to a deficiency (or gap analysis finding) in this area by submitting an implementation plan with its corrective action response. The laboratory will then have a year to obtain training, write its procedures, and estimate uncertainty where it is applicable.
All these new documents are posted on A2LA's web site, www.a2la.org.



NEW STAFF MEMBER

To enhance its capability to meet the accreditation demand from calibration laboratories, A2LA has hired Dana Leaman as Laboratory Services Officer. Ms. Leaman holds a B.S. in Chemistry degree from Austin Peay State U., in Clarksville, TN, and formerly worked as a research scientist with the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory's Center for Bio/Molecular Science and Engineering. One of her favorite leisure pursuits is traveling, particularly trips that include touring lighthouses.

DIRECTORY ERROR

The 2000 edition of the A2LA Directory of Accredited Laboratories included an incorrect address for Ralco, Inc. (Certificate Number 802.01). The correct address is: 81 State Street, North Haven, CT 06472. We regret this error.

2001 QUALITY IN LABORATORY TRAINING COURSE SCHEDULE

Please visit our web site (www.a2la.org) for a description of the courses listed below.

Irvine, CA

Jan. 5 ISO/IEC 17025, The New Standard for Laboratories

Charleston, SC

Feb. 26-27 ISO/IEC 17025 and Accreditation

Feb. 28 ISO/IEC 17025, The New Standard for Laboratories

March 1-2 Calibration Laboratory Practices

March 5-6 Measurement Uncertainty

Columbia, MD

March 12 ISO/IEC 17025, The New Standard for Laboratories

Irvine, CA

April 6 ISO/IEC 17025, The New Standard for Laboratories

New Orleans, LA

April 23-24 ISO/IEC 17025 and Accreditation

April 25 ISO/IEC 17025, The New Standard for Laboratories

April 26-27 Calibration Laboratory Practices

Apr. 30-May 5 Measurement Uncertainty

Irvine, CA

June 8 ISO/IEC 17025, The New Standard for Laboratories

2001 BOARD MEETINGS

Three A2LA Board of Directors' meetings have been scheduled for the coming year:

- **February 22-23, 2001** • **April 23-24, 2001*** • **October 18-19, 2001.**

** In conjunction with A2LA's Annual Meeting and Annual Assessor Conclave.*

STAFF DIRECTORY

| Name | Title | E-mail | Phone | Areas of Responsibility | |
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| | Christy Urban | Lab. Serv. Officer | curban@a2la.org | (301) 644-3236 | Mechanical, Chemical, Acoustics & Vibration; automotive |
| | Sara Weitzel | Lab. Serv. Officer | sweitzel@a2la.org | (301) 644-3224 | Mechanical, Chemical; plastics, rubber, textiles, paper |
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| | Ronald Bell | Lab. Serv. Officer | rbell@a2la.org | (301) 644-3203 | Construction Materials, Geotechnical, Nondestructive, Chemical (coal); USGA Putting Green Program |
| | Atefeh Fathi | Lab. Serv. Officer | afathi@a2la.org | (301) 644-3210 | Proficiency testing (PT) for CTS and environmental programs |
| | Teresa Adams | Operations Manager | tcadams@a2la.org | (301) 644-3202 | Manager of Operations |
| MEASUREMENT UNCERTAINTY | | | | | |
| Thomas Adams | Metrology Manager | tmadams@a2la.org | (301) 644-3219 | Measurement uncertainty for all fields | |
| MEMBERSHIP | | | | | |
| Brandy Rowe | Receptionist | browe@a2la.org | (301) 644-3200 | Membership inquiries | |
| Marie Wright | Accounting Officer | mwright@a2la.org | (301) 644-3211 | Membership billing | |
| NEWSLETTER | | | | | |
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| PROFICIENCY TESTING ACCREDITATION PROGRAM | | | | | |
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| Warren Merkel | Technical Manager | wmerkel@a2la.org | (301) 644-3204 | Requirements inquiries | |
| QUALITY ISSUES/CONCERNS | | | | | |
| Ramona Saar | Quality Manager | rsaar@a2la.org | (301) 644-3201 | Complaints, quality manual, recognition agreements | |
| REFERENCE MATERIAL PRODUCERS ACCREDITATION PROGRAM | | | | | |
| Randy Query | Program Manager | rquery@a2la.org | (301) 644-3221 | RM Producer status inquiries | |
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| Ronald Bell | Lab. Serv. Officer | rbell@a2la.org | (301) 644-3203 | Construction Materials Advisory Committee (CMAC) | |
| Randy Query | Program Manager | rquery@a2la.org | (301) 644-3221 | Life Sciences Advisory Committee (LSAC) | |
| Trace McInturff | Program Manager | tmcinturff@a2la.org | (301) 644-3223 | Electromechanical Advisory Committee (EMAC) | |
| Steve Medellin | Sr. Lab. Serv. Officer | smedellin@a2la.org | (301) 644-3228 | Materials Testing Advisory Committee (MTAC) | |
| TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS | | | | | |
| Warren Merkel | Technical Manager | wmerkel@a2la.org | (301) 644-3204 | Technical documents, trade shows and conferences; technical liaison to users, industry groups and government agencies | |
| Thomas Adams | Metrology Manager | tmadams@a2la.org | (301) 644-3219 | Calibration documents | |
| TRAINING PROGRAM | | | | | |
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| Teresa McCarthy | Accounting Officer | tmccarthy@a2la.org | (301) 644-3229 | Training invoices/billing | |
| Julie Stevens | Lab. Srvs. Assoc. | jstevens@a2la.org | (301) 644-3235 | Training registration | |
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| Ramona Saar | Quality Manager | rsaar@a2la.org | (301) 644-3201 | Web site content inquiries | |

A2LA ISO/IEC 17025 TRANSITION PLAN FOR 2001

(revision date: 12/01/2000)

The International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) recently issued the following revised transition guidance to laboratory accreditation bodies:

“Accreditation bodies shall require that the laboratories for which they grant and maintain accreditation comply with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17025 by December 31, 2002. No extra surveillance activities will be required to confirm this but all accredited labs must have been through a surveillance, evaluation or re-evaluation before this date. After this date all accreditation documents must refer to ISO/IEC 17025.”

The chart noted below identifies the A2LA assessment options available to new and renewal laboratories for 2001 to ensure that we meet our goal of demonstrated compliance to ISO/IEC 17025 by July of 2002, six months in advance of the ILAC deadline.

NEW AND RENEWAL ASSESSMENTS

| Assessment Date | Options | Documentation | Comments |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Beginning January 1, 2001 | (1) ISO/IEC 17025 | ISO/IEC 17025 checklist | |
| | (2) ISO/IEC Guide 25 with an ISO/IEC 17025 Gap Analysis | ISO/IEC Guide 25 and 17025 Gaps Checklist - document gap analysis by filling out bolded (17025) items; Assessors will write up “gaps” in separate form attached to deficiency report that includes the following statements. <i>“In order to be considered for accreditation to ISO/IEC 17025, objective evidence that the following items have been addressed needs to be provided to A2LA with the annual review/surveillance.”</i> | <p><i>Note 1:</i> Response to gaps due at annual review (renewals) or surveillance (new).</p> <p><i>Note 2:</i> Depending on the number and nature of the gaps identified during the gap analysis, an on-site revisit may be required to verify compliance.</p> |
| Beginning July 1, 2001 | (1) ISO/IEC 17025 | ISO/IEC 17025 checklist | |

SURVEILLANCE ASSESSMENTS

Surveillance assessments that occur during 2001 must automatically include the ISO 17025 Gap Analysis at a minimum if the lab was assessed to ISO/IEC Guide 25 during the initial accreditation process. See Option (2) above.

VEALE INTERVIEW

(continued from page 7)

What advice would he give to a new assessor?

"Maybe, the importance of proper preparation before you go on site. Talk with the lab people by phone. Read carefully the information that A2LA provides. You really ought to feel confident that the lab is going to pass before you go on an assessment. It makes for a more enjoyable visit if they're ready. Understand what the lab can do. Know its strengths and weaknesses before you go on site."

As a seasoned traveler, Ralph adds one more bit of advice. "Develop patience in waiting for airplanes to take off."

A2LA SIGNS INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENT TO ENHANCE TRADE

(continued from page 2)

further develop or enhance trade agreements," explained Mike Peet, Chief Executive Officer of the South African National Accreditation System and Chair of the ILAC committee that developed the recently signed Arrangement. "There is now a firm foundation in place for manufacturers and exporters that have their goods tested by accredited laboratories to enjoy greater market access, less costs associated with retesting and greater overall competitiveness in global markets."

Established in 1977, ILAC is the

premier international forum for the harmonization of laboratory accreditation procedures and policies as a means of reducing technical barriers to trade and the promotion of laboratory accreditation as a mechanism to enhance confidence in testing and calibration facilities, both domestically and internationally. For further details on the ILAC Arrangement, contact the ILAC Secretariat by phone (+612-9736-8222), fax (+612-9743-5311), e-mail (ilac@nata.asn.au) or visit ILAC's Web site (<http://www.ilac.org>).

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