

# A2LA today

The Newsletter of the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation

## A2LA Offers New IT Testing Accreditation Program

By Rob Knake, A2LA Senior Accreditation Officer

A2LA is proud to announce our new program for Information Technology testing laboratories that test software designed to generate the Calibration and Measurement Capability (CMC) claims placed on an accredited organization's Scope of Accreditation. The new program was developed to expand A2LA's current IT testing program to specifically include laboratories that test CMC-generating software. The new requirements may be found in *R214 - Specific Requirements: Information Technology Testing Laboratory Accreditation Program*. As part of the new program, A2LA has also developed new requirements for end users who elect to utilize the software in lieu of creating traditional uncertainty calculations. These new requirements are found in *R205b - Annex to Specific Requirements: Calibration Measurement Uncertainty Software*. Both documents are available on our website at [www.A2LA.org](http://www.A2LA.org).

The CMC software is designed for automated measurement processes in which the function of the software is to take the necessary measurements and perform the appropriate calculations of the contributing factor values generated by the equipment set and any other significant contributing factors (environment, repeatability measurements, etc.) necessary to calculate the CMC values in accordance with ISO/IEC Guide 98 "Guide to the Expression of Uncertainty in Measurement" (GUM). It should be made clear that this program is only applicable to the testing of software that can generate CMC values that support an accredited organization's Scope of Accreditation. It is not intended to be applied to software where the main function is to determine the actual uncertainty of a particular measurement to report to the client or to be a "number cruncher" that simply runs inputs through an equation.

The program is intended not only to apply to the testing laboratory for CMC software but also for the end user of that software. Some of the requirements for users include evidence that the software is accompanied by an accredited test report (including software updates), that the organization is in possession of the proper equipment and maintains the proper environmental conditions as required by the specifications/tolerances of the software and that they have properly trained personnel that are competent to use the calibration system consisting of software and equipment. Assessor review of all input items is also required during the course of the assessment. See *R205b - Annex to Specific Requirements: Calibration Measurement Uncertainty Software* for more information.

The intent of this new program is to offer an option for those accredited organizations that prefer to rely on CMC-generating software rather than traditional uncertainty calculations and it should also allow for greater uniformity of measurement uncertainty claims.

*Continued on page 2*

## in this issue...

### Updates on A2LA:

- A2LA Offers New IT Testing Accreditation Program
- A2LA Contracts Lead Metrologist
- A2LA Now Accepting Applications for the New Special Inspection Program
- New & Updated Documents
- Change in Annual Review of Accreditation Process

### General Notices & Press Releases:

- Spring 2011 Training Schedule
- "Decoding ISO 15189" Webinar Now Being Offered
- Remembering Bertha Munguia
- Remembering Nancy Foncannon
- Upcoming Webinar Training Events
- A2LA and IQMH Exhibit Jointly at ASCP Annual Meeting
- A2LA Accepts Online Credit Card Payments
- Sloneker Conducts Jointly-Organized Tutorial
- First Annual A2LA Technical Forum and Annual Meeting

### International Activities:

- ILAC-Shanghai General Assembly

## newsletter staff

- Editor: [Teresa Barnett](#)
- Layout Design: [Gina McInturff](#)



*Continued from page 1*

In addition, Information Technology testing laboratories gain the benefit of having their procedures validated for calculating the CMC values per the GUM requirements.

It is important to note that those organizations that prefer to rely on traditional uncertainty calculations to support the Scope of Accreditation may continue to do so even if they use some form of software to simply tabulate and sum manually-entered contributors. This new program allows for an option of using CMC-generating software solely in lieu of this traditional process.

If you are an organization that currently is testing CMC software and are interested in pursuing accreditation or if you have any questions please contact Robert Knake at [rknake@A2LA.org](mailto:rknake@A2LA.org) or 301-644-3218. ❄️

## *A2LA Contracts Lead Metrologist*

*By Teresa Barnett, A2LA Quality Manager*

A2LA is pleased to announce that we have contracted Mr. John Ball to act as our lead metrologist. Acting in this capacity, he has already made significant contributions in assisting A2LA staff to address technical issues and resolve technical complaints.

John is the former director of the Army Primary Standards Laboratory (APSL) at Redstone Arsenal, AL-where he managed over one hundred technical personnel working in virtually every measurement area-until he retired from the government in 2004. Since 2004, he has been a senior assessor for A2LA and has conducted many calibration laboratory assessments. He is past chairman of the NCSLI Intrinsic and Derived Standards Committee and remains an active NCSLI member. He also served on the National Research Council Assessment Panel which conducted periodic on-site assessments of NIST. John has a B.S. in Physics from Arkansas State University, an M.S. in Physics from Georgia Tech, and is a program management graduate of the Defense Systems Management College.

A2LA is confident that this step will add to the strong technical underpinnings of the Association and will increase consistency in how technical issues in the calibration area are addressed. ❄️

## A2LA Now Accepting Applications for the New Special Inspection Program

*By Beth Carbonella, A2LA Senior Accreditation Officer*

The American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA) is proud to announce the expansion of its accreditation activities to encompass Special Inspection Agencies in New York City, NY.

The criteria for Special Inspection Agency accreditation require agencies to provide objective evidence of compliance to ISO/IEC 17020 by gaining and maintaining accreditation through a recognized Accreditation Body (AB) (such as A2LA). The accreditation will confirm compliance to ASTM E329 and local requirements associated with the International Building Code Chapter 17. A2LA has created the **R310 – Specific Requirements: Special Inspection Agencies Inspection Body Accreditation Program** document, highlighting the specific areas which go above and beyond the requirements of ISO/IEC 17020.

A2LA is currently accepting new applications for accreditation from inspection agencies who wish to comply with the Rules of NY Section 101-06. Further, A2LA is working with other jurisdictions to write relevant requirements to expand this program offering. Please direct any questions on applying for accreditation to Beth Carbonella at 301 644 3219 or [ecarbonella@A2LA.org](mailto:ecarbonella@A2LA.org). There are resources devoted to ensure prompt attention to all interested parties' needs. Currently accredited organizations should direct questions on expanding their scope of accreditation to their current Accreditation Officer at A2LA. ❄️

# New & Updated Documents

By Teresa Barnett, A2LA Quality Manager

The following documents have been updated within the controlled A2LA management system. All of these documents are available on the A2LA website ([www.A2LA.org](http://www.A2LA.org)) through the “Document Finder” option unless otherwise indicated.

- *P103d – Annex: Policy on Estimating Measurement Uncertainty for Construction Materials & Geotechnical Testing Labs* was updated on September 2, 2010. (Document Finder Category: Policies)
- *G106 – Guidance for Scopes of Accreditation of Accreditation for Product Certification Bodies under the TCB Accreditation Program* was updated on September 2, 2010. (Document Finder Category: A2LA Guidance Documents)
- *R308 – Specific Requirements: Telecommunication Certification Body Accreditation Program* was updated on September 2, 2010. (Document Finder Category: Specific Requirements)
- *C216 – Specific Checklist: FCC Technical Assessment Evaluation* was updated on September 2, 2010. (Document Finder Category: Specific Checklists)
- *C302 – General Checklist: ILAC G-13:2007 Proficiency Testing Provider Accreditation Program* was made obsolete on September 22, 2010.
- *C304 – Specific Checklist: Proficiency Testing Provider Accreditation Program – NELAC Requirements for Water Studies* was made obsolete on September 22, 2010.
- *C307 – General Checklist: ISO Guide 34:2000 Reference Material Producer Accreditation Program* was made obsolete on September 22, 2010.
- *C311 – Specific Checklist: A2LA/The NELAC Institute Proficiency Testing Provider Requirements* was made obsolete on September 22, 2010.
- *P103b – Annex: Policy on Estimating Measurement Uncertainty for Life Sciences Testing Labs* was updated on September 22, 2010. (Document Finder Category: Policies)
- *R309 – Specific Requirements: Forensic Examination Accreditation Program (Inspection)* was updated on September 28, 2010. (Document Finder Category: Specific Requirements)

If you have any questions about these updates, please contact A2LA at 301 644 3248 or your Accreditation Officer directly. ❄

## Change in Annual Review of Accreditation Process

By Trace McInturff,  
A2LA Operations Manager

A2LA requires each Conformity Assessment Body (CAB) (i.e. laboratory, inspection body, product certification body, reference material producer, proficiency testing provider) to undergo an annual review of accreditation at the mid-point of their two-year accreditation cycle (or after the first, second and third years of accreditation for proficiency testing providers). The current process is to generate and send out the annual review of accreditation forms, documentation and invoice six (6) months in advance of when the annual review is due to be completed, with the forms and payment due within 45 days.

In another customer service initiative, beginning with CAB anniversary dates of May 2012, A2LA will be generating and distributing the necessary forms and invoices in February 2011 or three months in advance of when the annual review is due to be completed, with a due date of 30 days. This will give CABs more time after each assessment without the worry of filling out annual review forms, providing documentation, and, more importantly, providing payment to A2LA.

If you have any questions regarding this change in process timing, please contact your Accreditation Officer (AcO). ❄

# Spring 2011 Training Schedule

## Course:

### Title: **Introduction to Measurement Uncertainty**

- February 28-March 1, 2011 - Savannah, GA (\$795.00 non-members, \$745.00 members)
- June 6-7, 2011 - Minneapolis, MN (\$795.00 non-members, \$745.00 members)

### Title: **ISO/IEC 17025 and Accreditation**

- March 2-4, 2011 - Savannah, GA (\$995.00 non-members, \$945.00 members)
- March 29-30, 2011 - Columbia, MD (\$795.00 non-members, \$745.00 members) (2-DAY COURSE being held in conjunction with the A2LA Technical Forum and Annual Meeting)
- June 8-10, 2011 - Minneapolis, MN (\$995.00 non-members, \$945.00 members)

### Title: **Root Cause Analysis and Corrective Action (NEW COURSE)**

- March 31, 2011 - Columbia, MD (\$495.00 non-members, \$445.00 members) (Being held in conjunction with the A2LA Technical Forum and Annual Meeting)

### Title: **Assessment of Laboratory Competence**

- April 18-22, 2011 - San Francisco, CA (\$1595.00 non-members, \$1545.00 members)

## Venues:

**February 27-March 4, 2011**  
**Marriott Savannah Riverfront**  
100 General McIntosh Blvd.  
Savannah, GA 31401  
800 285 0398  
Rate: \$152.00 per Night

**March 28-31, 2011**  
**Sheraton Columbia**  
10207 Wincopin Circle  
Columbia, MD 21044  
410 730 3900  
Rate: \$124.00 per Night

**April 18-22, 2011**  
**The Westin St. Francis**  
335 Powell Street  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
415 397 7000  
Rate: \$229.00 per Night

**June 5-10, 2011**  
**Minneapolis Marriott City Center**  
30 South 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55402  
612 349 4000  
Rate: \$180.00 per Night

For additional information, please contact Julie Collins, A2LA Training Program Manager, at 301 644 3235 or [jcollins@A2LA.org](mailto:jcollins@A2LA.org). ❄



The American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA), in partnership with the Institute for Quality Management in Healthcare (IQMH), is proud to announce that it is now offering an interactive online education tool, Decoding ISO 15189™, which is designed to help medical labs prepare for ISO 15189 accreditation.

With this educational series you may learn at your own pace, re-watch modules, download a library of PDFs, view video coaching tips, access useful tools such as workbooks, templates and samples, and set up multiple user accounts.

### **The benefits of this series include:**

**Gain international recognition** - ISO 15189 Medical laboratories – Particular requirements for quality and competence is quickly becoming the international standard of excellence for medical labs. Decoding ISO 15189™ can ensure that your staff understands the rigorous requirements.

**Establish a plan of action** - Use our detailed step-by-step workbooks, templates, samples and downloadable PDFs to begin implementing the ISO 15189 requirements.

**Understand the requirements** - Decipher the requirements of ISO 15189 and translate them into an easy-to-follow plan of action for your staff.

**Create a quality manual** - Use our sample templates and detailed analysis of the requirements to create a quality manual.

**Employ document control** - Evaluate different approaches to document control, learn which documents need to be controlled and establish a system to meet your needs.

**Be prepared for your audit** - Understand what your auditors will be looking for and have the required measures in place.

For details on registering for this educational opportunity, please visit <http://www.A2LA.org/iqmh/decode15189intro.cfm>. ❄

# Remembering

## Bertha Munguia

*By Peter Unger, A2LA President/CEO*

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Bertha Munguia at the age of 45.

Her courageous four-year battle with cancer ended on November 11.

Bertha's last fourteen years in consulting included contributions to A2LA as well as to other accreditation and certification bodies of the Americas and the global accreditation community. Using her excellent bilingual skills, Bertha served not only as a superb life sciences laboratory assessor in both Spanish and English, but also as a management system auditor, a trainer, a peer evaluator of accreditation bodies, and a creator of guidance on the application of ISO conformity assessment standards including 17025, 17011, 9001, 14001, and 22000. She was a kind and generous person often devoting energy and time to help people without recompense. Aside from suffering a huge loss of her professional talents, we will greatly miss her delightful smile and the joy and happiness she brought to those around her.

Before embarking on her consulting career, Bertha served two independent testing laboratories from 1987 to 1996, beginning as a technician in microbiology, chemical, physical testing and instruments testing for food, drinking water, alcoholic beverages and feed, waste water, air, soils, cosmetics and bioassays. For both labs, she was in charge of the laboratory quality system including management of their accreditation. At the last laboratory, she served as technical director.

Her interest in laboratory accreditation was always evident since her attendance at ILAC Hong Kong in 1994. Turning down lucrative offers to be a full-time employee, Bertha loved the freedom and wide ranging experiences being an A2LA assessor and independent consultant.

She received her university degree in food technology engineering from the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, México, D.F.

She is survived by her two brothers, an aunt, cousin and several nephews and nieces. Donations may be made in her name to the Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation (14 Pennsylvania Plaza, Suite 1400, New York, NY 10122) either online ([www.ocrf.org](http://www.ocrf.org)) or by telephone (212 268 1002). ❄



## Nancy Foncannon



It is with great sadness that A2LA reports that Nancy Foncannon has passed away at the age of 57 on Sunday, October 24, 2010 in Three Rivers, MI. Nancy worked with A2LA for 22 years as an assessor performing 364 assessments for the Association and also served admirably on the A2LA Board of Directors and Accreditation Council.

Nancy is survived by one daughter, Michelle Foncannon, and her husband, Kyle Smith, of Columbia, MD; one brother, Reynold Sutake, of Dearborn, MI; cousins, nieces, nephews, aunts and uncles.

Nancy was deeply admired and will be greatly missed. Memorial contributions may be made to Heartland Hospice or to the Marcellus (MI) Ambulance Service. ❄

# Upcoming Webinar Training Events - *Offered by A2LA in Partnership with WorkPlace Training.*

## **TITLE: Interpreting Equipment Specifications**

2 Hours: January 11, 2011 ■ 1:00 PM EST

### **TOPICS:**

Equipment specifications relationship to:  
accuracy, precision and resolution.  
Interpreting specifications for measurement uncertainty.  
Applying specifications for testing & calibration.  
Relationship to Test Uncertainty Ratio (T.U.R.).

## **TITLE: Equipment Calibration Interval Analysis**

3 Hours: January 12, 2011 ■ 1:00 PM EST

### **TOPICS:**

The requirement for interval analysis.  
Definitions associated with interval analysis.  
Statistics associated with interval analysis.  
Implementing interval analysis.

## **TITLE: Introduction to Measurement Uncertainty**

2 Hours: December 13, 2010 ■ 1:00 PM EST

2 Hours: January 13, 2011 ■ 1:00 PM EST

### **TOPICS:**

Measurement uncertainty definitions.  
Why measurement uncertainty is required.  
Measurement uncertainty and ISO/IEC 17025/ANSI Z540.3.  
Minimum measurement uncertainty contributors.  
Simplified process for determining measurement uncertainty.  
Measurement uncertainty references.

## **TITLE: Measurement Uncertainty for Electrical Parameters**

2 Hours: December 14, 2010 ■ 1:00 PM EST

### **TOPICS:**

Basic electrical measurement uncertainty contributors.  
Type A and Type B uncertainty classification.  
Converting the contributors to standard uncertainty.  
Combining uncertainties.  
Assigning k-factor and t-distribution.  
Reporting in an uncertainty budget.

## **TITLE: Understanding ANSI Z540.3**

3 Hours: January 10, 2011 ■ 1:00 PM EST

### **TOPICS:**

Introduction to ANSI Z540.3.  
Complying with ANSI Z540.3 requirements.  
Development of a Z540.3 compliance checklist.  
Planning, conducting and reporting the results of an ANSI Z540.3 assessment.  
New Requirements:  
Less than 2% probability of false accept (PFA) risk requirements.  
Measurement assurance and SPC.  
Calibration interval analysis requirement.

For more information about these upcoming webinars and for instructions on how to register, please visit our website at: <http://www.A2LA.org/training/workplace.cfm> ❄

## **A2LA and IQMH Exhibit Jointly at the American Society for Clinical Pathology Annual Meeting**

In October 2010 A2LA - in partnership with the Institute for Quality Management in Healthcare (IQMH) - announced that it is now offering an interactive online education tool, **Decoding ISO 15189™**, which is designed to help medical laboratories prepare for ISO 15189 accreditation.

As part of this partnership, A2LA and IQMH jointly exhibited at the American Society for Clinical Pathology Annual Meeting to promote awareness of ISO 15189 medical laboratory accreditation and the education tool now available to assist in preparation for accreditation.

Please visit the A2LA web page at <http://www.A2LA.org/iqmh/decode15189intro.cfm> for more information on the **Decoding ISO 15189™** online educational tool. ❄



## A2LA accepts online credit card payments

**A2LA is now accepting credit card payments on our website!**

In addition, we now accept most major credit cards. We are currently accepting -

**VISA ■ MasterCard ■ American Express ■ Diners Club**

**Discover ■ EnRoute ■ JCB**

It was our intention to roll this feature out gradually in order to minimize potential problems. To that end we initially introduced it exclusively to our members. Membership renewal invoices were sent on November 1<sup>st</sup> with an invitation to pay on the web. We have already received many online payments from our members – and we wish to thank them!

Soon we will be adding the credit card payment function to our training class registrations. We expect this to be implemented by early 2011.

Ultimately we intend to have a customer log-in where individual customers will be able to view account activity and pay any type of invoice on the web.

Please stay tuned for updates as we expand and improve this feature. ❄

## Sloneker conducts jointly-organized tutorial



*By Phil Smith, A2LA Public Affairs Manager*

A special tutorial on the theory and application of thermocouples, jointly organized by the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA), the National Conference of Standards Laboratory International (NCSLI) and CalSource, was presented at the MACNY building in Syracuse, NY on Tuesday, October 26, 2010 by K.C. Sloneker, Laboratory Director for Electronic Development Laboratories and ASL US.

Thermocouples are widely viewed as “simple” measurement tools that can be easily employed to obtain reliable temperatures. While this is sometimes true, more often thermocouples are anything but simple. The most important requirement when using a thermocouple is to determine whether its measurements are correct and reliable, and this determination requires a fundamental understanding of a thermocouple’s basic operating principles by the technician.

The tutorial included a brief review of thermoelectricity including how it is generated and its relation to thermodynamics. Inhomogeneity in thermocouples and its effects on practical measurements were also presented. The tutorial concluded with an examination of the results of a recent thermocouple inter-laboratory comparison, demonstrating why thermocouple users must have a fundamental understanding of how thermocouples work.

**“Thank you so much for the excellent presentation this last Tuesday. I learned so much. .... I often suspected there had to be way more to Thermo Couples than Seebeck Effect!”**

**- John Ivanov, Welch Allyn, Inc, Skaneateles Falls, NY**

Mr. Sloneker and A2LA are considering the option of offering a multi-day training course on temperature measurement in the near future. Please contact Phil Smith ([psmith@A2LA.org](mailto:psmith@A2LA.org) or 240 535 2109) if you are interested in attending. ❄

## 1<sup>st</sup> Annual A2LA Technical Forum and Annual Meeting

*By Trace McInturff,*

*A2LA Operations Manager*

**Mark your calendars for the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual A2LA Technical Forum and Annual Meeting** (formerly the A2LA Assessor Conclave) on March 28 – April 5, 2011 at the Sheraton Columbia in Columbia, MD. New Assessor Orientation Training will be held Monday, March 28<sup>th</sup> through Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup>. There will be an open Conformity Assessment Body (CAB) meeting in the afternoon of Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup> with a ‘happy hour’ reception to follow. Meetings on April 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> are open to interested parties and A2LA encourages representatives from our accredited or enrolled laboratories, proficiency testing providers, inspection bodies, reference material producers and product certification bodies to attend, including the banquet and awards dinner on Saturday night, April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Invitations and on-line registration information will be sent out in mid-January 2011. If you are not a member but would like to join one of the technical advisory committees please contact A2LA (301 644 3248) or your Accreditation Officer. Information on each of A2LA’s technical advisory committees may be found on our website at: <http://www.A2LA.org/genweb/tac.cfm> ❄

# ILAC- Shanghai General Assembly – October 2010

by Peter Unger, A2LA President/CEO

The **International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC)** annual general assembly and associated committee meetings were held in Shanghai, China on October 21-29, 2010. This was the tenth occasion where ILAC met jointly with the **International Accreditation Forum (IAF)**, the international organization for accreditation of certification bodies.

### Highlights of the ILAC General Assembly included:

■ Ten new signatories were added to the ILAC Arrangement: Sri Lanka Accreditation Board for Conformity Assessment (SLAB), testing; Papua New Guinea Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (PNGLAS), testing; Croatian Accreditation Agency (HAA), testing and calibration; Hungarian Accreditation Board (NAT), testing and calibration; Ente Costarricense De Acreditacion (ECA), extension of scope to include calibration; AIHA Laboratory Accreditation Programs, (AIHA-LAP), testing; Organismo Uruguayo de Acreditación (OUA), testing; Instituto Nacional de Normalización (INN), testing and calibration; Sistema Italiano di Accreditamento (ACCREDIA), extension of scope to include calibration; National Centre for Accreditation (NCA), testing and calibration.

■ Three new Affiliate members were accepted: Bangladesh Accreditation Service (BAB); PPD, South Africa; GCC Accreditation Centre, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

■ A new Stakeholder was accepted: National Laboratories Association of Zimbabwe (NLAZ).

■ The inspection body accreditation MRA was transferred from IAF to ILAC alone.

■ The election of the following officers to the ILAC Executive Committee for two years was endorsed:

Chair	Peter Unger
Vice-Chair	Merih Malmqvist Nilsson
Arrangement Committee	Ileana Martinez
Accreditation Committee	Regina Robertson
Marketing & Communications Committee	Graham Talbot
Joint Development Support Committee	Dorsaf Zangar
Arrangement Management Committee	Andreas Steinhorst
Unaffiliated Representative	Dorsaf Zangar
Laboratory Committee	Steve Sidney
Proficiency Testing Consultative Group	Linda Crawford

### ILAC membership as of November 5, 2010 is as follows:

70 Full Members (Signatories to the ILAC Arrangement) representing 58 economies;

18 Associates representing 18 economies;

20 Affiliates representing 19 economies;

4 Regional Cooperation Bodies

25 Stakeholders

The ILAC membership (a total of 137 bodies) now covers a total of 91 different economies worldwide and more than 33,000 laboratories and over 6,000 inspection bodies are accredited by the 70 ILAC Full Members (signatories to the ILAC Arrangement).

### Future meetings of ILAC are planned for:

2011 – Bangkok

2012 – Rio de Janeiro

2013 – Seoul

Further information on the ILAC meeting can be found at the ILAC web site: [www.ilac.org](http://www.ilac.org). ❄



“World Class Accreditation”

### The American Association for Laboratory Accreditation

5301 Buckeystown Pike, Suite 350  
Frederick, Md 21704



Season's  
Greetings  
from A2LA!