A2LA is proud to announce the launch of its first pilot programs. Pilot programs have historically been used by other organizations to assist in the growth, development and promotion of new programs to customers. Upon review by A2LA it was determined that the use of pilot programs was in keeping with our mission to continually improve, strengthen and enhance our current programs. Additionally, it was agreed that these pilot programs would provide our customers with a unique opportunity not only to benefit from waived assessment fees, but also to contribute to the development of new areas of accreditation through membership on the A2LA technical advisory committees and the completion of feedback questionnaires.

On February 17, 2012, a pilot program page was launched on the A2LA website and two initial pilot programs were announced.

The A2LA FBI QAS Pilot Program is being offered to those organizations that are currently approved by the FBI National DNA Index System (NDIS) Board and that are seeking assessment to the FBI Quality Assurance Standards for DNA Testing and Databasing to meet the following requirements:

**Quality Assurance Standards for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories, Section 15.2:**
“At least once every two years, an external audit shall be conducted by an audit team comprised of qualified auditor(s) from a second agency(ies) and having at least one team member who is or has been an analyst previously qualified* in the laboratory’s current DNA technologies and platform.”

**Quality Assurance Standards for DNA Databasing Laboratories, Section 15.2:**
“At least once every two years, an external audit shall be conducted by an audit team comprised of qualified auditor(s) from a second agency(ies) and having at least one team member who is or has been an analyst previously qualified* in the laboratory’s current DNA technologies and platform and one team member who is currently or was previously a qualified analyst from a databasing laboratory.”

*Qualified auditor is a current or previously qualified DNA analyst who has successfully completed the FBI DNA Auditor’s training course.

Continued on page 2
The A2LA Crime Scene Analysis Pilot Program is being offered to those organizations performing on-site evaluations of scenes of incidents to include criminal activity (crime scenes), structural failures (forensic engineering), and environmental/ecological hazards (chemical spills).

A2LA will be accepting applications for either program from May 1 through May 15, 2012. From those applications received, A2LA will select the first three applicants for each pilot that meet all application requirements of the program.

For those interested in applying, additional information about the pilot programs may be found on the A2LA website at http://www.a2la.org/appsweb/pilot.cfm or by contacting the Forensic Examination Accreditation Program contacts, Karin Athanas (301 664 3236; kathanas@A2LA.org) or Ashly Carter (301 664 3238; acarter@A2LA.org).

The 2012 A2LA Technical Forum and Annual Meeting will be held from March 19–25, 2012 at the Sheraton Columbia in Columbia, MD. New Assessor Orientation Training will be held Monday, March 19th through Friday, March 23rd. Saturday, March 24th, will consist of meetings of the A2LA Technical Advisory Committees and there will be an open Conformity Assessment Body (CAB) meeting the morning of Sunday, March 25th. Meetings on March 24th and 25th 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, March 24th.

Invitations and on-line registration information were sent out in January 2012. 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.

SmartCEO Magazine named A2LA as one of the 50 fastest growing companies in the greater Baltimore area. The criteria for being named one of Smart CEO’s “Future 50” are combined growth rates of revenues and employees over a three-year period. Each company named was determined to be steadily growing while remaining true to their missions to provide exceptional products and services to their customers.

A gala dinner was held in downtown Baltimore on January 19, at which A2LA President/CEO, Peter Unger, was presented with a plaque. A2LA is one of only two non-profit organizations identified as recipients of this award. A profile of each “Future 50” company was also presented in the January 2012 issue of Baltimore SmartCEO magazine.
A2LA Grants First SSAS Accreditation

By Randy Querry, A2LA Accreditation Manager

A2LA granted accreditation to the first Stationary Source Audit Sample (SSAS) Provider on January 31, 2012. ERA, located in Arvada, CO, has expanded their proficiency testing provider Scope of Accreditation to include stationary source audit samples. A2LA evaluated their procedures, reviewed records and observed practices resulting in the expansion of ERA’s accredited capabilities.

The Stationary Source Audit Sample (SSAS) Program was established for the environmental monitoring industry that measures emissions of pollutants from stationary sources such as smoke stacks. The US EPA Office of Air and Radiation previously administered a program that provided free audit samples to state and local government agencies. Due to the increasing need for audit samples and the availability of private sector organizations capable of providing audit samples, the EPA has opted to discontinue supplying these samples. The US EPA’s Measurement and Technology Group, Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards will instead rely on The NELAC Institute’s (TNI) Stationary Source Audit Sample (SSAS) Program.

A2LA is a TNI-recognized SSAS Provider Accreditation Body. The A2LA assessment criteria is based on TNI General Requirements for Stationary Source Sample Providers, Volume 1, Module 1 (2009-Rev 0.2) which is available on TNI’s website at http://nelac-institute.org/ssas/.

A2LA is now accepting applications from SSAS providers who are interested in being accredited under this program (http://www.a2la.org/pt/proficiencytesting.cfm). A2LA is also offering Scope expansions to existing A2LA-accredited TNI proficiency testing providers that offer stationary source audit samples.

For more information on our SSAS provider accreditation program, please contact Robert Knake, A2LA Program Manager at (301) 644-3218 or via email at rknake@A2LA.org.

Spring 2012 Training Schedule

Course:

Title: **Introduction to Measurement Uncertainty**
- June 25-26, 2012 - Columbus, OH
  ($795.00 non-members, $745.00 members)

Title: **ISO/IEC 17025 and Accreditation**
- June 27-29, 2012 - Columbus, OH
  ($995.00 non-members, $945.00 members)

Title: **Assessment of Laboratory Competence**
- April 16-20, 2012 - New Orleans, LA
  ($1595.00 non-members, $1545.00 members)

Venues:

**April 15-April 20, 2012**
Hotel Monteleone
214 Royal Street
New Orleans, LA 70130
504 523 3341
Rate: $179.00 per Night

**June 24-29, 2012**
Hilton Columbus at Easton
3900 Chagrin Drive
Columbus, OH 43219
614 414 5000
Rate: $185.00 per Night

For additional information, please contact Julie Collins, A2LA Training/Membership Administrator, at 301 644 3235 or jcollins@A2LA.org.
A2LA-APHL Collaboration

By Larnell C. Simpson, A2LA Director of Marketing/Medical Affairs

The American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA), in collaboration with the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL), is sponsoring five high-quality, prerecorded webinars that provide an introductory overview of the requirements for an accredited laboratory’s quality management system.

Using a comprehensive review of the management system requirements of ISO/IEC 17025:2005, including its documentation and record keeping requirements, instructors provide critical insight to participants. The webinars provide the background information necessary to design and develop quality manuals and related quality documents and they provide helpful tips needed to facilitate internal audit and management review processes.

“We are pleased that, in collaborating with APHL on this webinar series, A2LA now has an on-demand information program available for everyone who has an interest,” said Peter Unger, President/CEO of A2LA. “This cost-effective training program can be utilized 24/7.”

This basic-level program is appropriate for Laboratory Technical Managers, Quality Managers, Laboratory Supervisors, Analysts, Technicians and other individuals working in laboratory sectors who wish to obtain the latest information about ISO/IEC 17025. APHL is approved as a provider of continuing education programs in the clinical laboratory sciences by the ASCLS P.A.C.E.® Program. Participants will be awarded 4.0 contact hours for completing the series and evaluation.

For more information go to: http://www.aphl.org/courses/Pages/588-720-12.aspx

Upcoming Webinar Training Events -

Offered by A2LA in Partnership with WorkPlace Training.

TITLE: Introduction to Measurement Uncertainty
2 Hours: April 12, 2012  1:00 PM EDT

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: Practical Methods for Reporting Measurement Uncertainty on a Calibration Report per ILAC P14 guidelines
2 Hours: April 13, 2012  1:00 PM EDT

TOPICS:
- Understanding ILAC P14 requirements.
- Metrological traceability
- Measurement uncertainty contributors
- Reporting customer’s measurement uncertainty
- Test Uncertainty Ratio (TUR) and compliance statements
- Helpful spreadsheet techniques.

TITLE: Introduction to ANSI Z540.3 (Note 3 hours for this web Event)
3 Hours: April 16, 2012  1:00 p.m. EDT

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

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.
New A2LA Board Members for 2012

By Teresa C. Barnett, A2LA Director of Quality

A2LA’s membership has voted in two new members of the A2LA Board of Directors: Judith Morgan and Helga Alexander.

Judith Morgan is the Vice President and Director of Technical & Regulatory Affairs for Environmental Science Corporation (ESC). She has been serving the environmental industry since 1986 and is a respected expert witness and formerly a registered lobbyist. The majority of her experience is specific to quality and regulatory matters, including experience as an analyst in both organic and inorganic methods. Her analytical experience includes Wet Chemistry, VOCs, Semi-Volatiles, GRO/DRO, Pesticides, Metals and Sample Preparation. Her instrumentation experience includes ICP, GC, GC/MS, AA, Autoanalyzer, UV/VIS and various other electrochemical instruments. She is a graduate of Austin Peay State University with a B.S. in Chemistry. Morgan also holds an M.S. in Analytical Chemistry from Western Kentucky University and is currently seeking an M.B.A. from Western Kentucky University. Furthermore, she has completed research at Vanderbilt University in environmental analysis.

Helga Alexander has recently been appointed Service Manager at Keithley Instruments after Keithley Metrology Services, which she had managed since 2003, merged with the Keithley Service Center operating under the Tektronix Service organization. During her leadership of Keithley Metrology Services, the laboratory achieved ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation by A2LA. She was also instrumental in the accreditation of Keithley’s German Service Center by A2LA. Ms. Alexander is an active participant in A2LA’s Measurement Advisory Committee (MAC), has also served on several NCSLI committees and is currently the Section Coordinator for NCSLI’s Northern Ohio Section. She originally joined Keithley as an optical engineer in 2000 and was involved in product design as well as the calibration of optical integrating spheres. Prior to joining Keithley, she was employed at NASA’s Glenn Research Center in Cleveland, designing and testing optical diagnostics instrumentation in support of microgravity research on NASA’s Space Station. Her original involvement with NASA started at Marshall Space Flight Center in Alabama, where she ran the Microgravity Division’s microprobe and scanning electron microscope, performing X-ray analysis on semiconductor crystals grown in space and on the ground. During her tenure there she also had the opportunity to be involved in three space missions, supporting microgravity crystal growth experiments on the USMP-2 and USMP-4 missions and working as the assistant to the Mission Scientist for the 16-day USML-2 mission. Ms. Alexander has received a B.S. in physics, with emphasis in optics, from the University of Alabama in Huntsville and an M.S. in Physics, with emphasis in optics, from Cleveland State University. She is also taking business classes toward an M.B.A. at Case Western Reserve University’s Weatherhead School of Management.

UPDATE: A2LA Accreditation Under the USEPA ENERGY STAR Program

By Mike Buzard, A2LA Accreditation Officer II

January 1, 2012 marked the first year anniversary of the United States Environmental Protection Agency’s (US EPA) revised ENERGY STAR program, utilizing third party testing and certification for product recognition. A2LA has been a leading provider of accreditations for laboratories and certification bodies wishing to gain recognition from the EPA for participation in this program, and is aiming to continue and increase its participation and cooperation with the Agency in 2012.

Since the June 2010 release of the EPA’s requirements document for accreditation bodies and testing laboratories and the August 2010 release of the requirements for product certification bodies, A2LA has accredited more than 40 organizations actively performing testing and/or certification of products for the ENERGY STAR program and is continuing to receive new applications and requests for expansions to currently existing Scopes of Accreditation.

A2LA is able to accredit laboratories and certification bodies for all product categories under the ENERGY STAR program, including lighting products. We offer accreditation to the ISO/IEC 17025:2005 standard for both third-party and captive (manufacturer-owned / “first party”) testing laboratories, and to the ISO/IEC Guide 65:1996 standard for product certification bodies. Such accreditations are only one of the requirements organizations must meet in order to gain recognition from the EPA.

If your organization would like to learn more about A2LA accreditation programs for recognition under the EPA ENERGY STAR program, please contact Mike Buzard (mbuzard@A2LA.org / 240-575-7484) for more information.
Updates on A2LA

A2LA Welcomes New Staff

By Teresa C. Barnett, A2LA Director of Quality

Since the last issue of A2LA Today, four new staff members have joined A2LA as Accreditation Officers: Ryan Carey, Nicole Kwarteng, Amanda Mitchell and Michelle Se RAFIN.

Ryan has a B.S. in Physics from Shippensburg University in Shippensburg, PA.

Nicole, prior to joining A2LA, was a Point of Care Testing Coordinator with Providence Hospital (Washington D.C.), a laboratory assistant with Quest Diagnostics (Washington D.C.) and a Co-Health Promoter with the American Cancer Society (Silver Spring, MD). Nicole has a B.S. in Biology from Hampton University in Hampton, VA.

Amanda, prior to joining us, was a professional tutor and SAT preparation instructor with Try Tutoring in Upper Marlboro, MD. Amanda has a B.S. in Mathematics from Millersville University in Millersville, PA.

Michelle, prior to joining A2LA, was a drug chemist at the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services with the State of Maryland Division of Parole and Probation in Baltimore, MD. She also has experience as an intern with the forensic units at the Maryland State Police, Baltimore County Police and Anne Arundel County Police. Michelle has a B.S. in Chemistry and an M.S. in Forensics from Stevenson University in Stevenson, MD.

We welcome Ryan, Nicole, Amanda and Michelle to the growing A2LA family!

New & Updated Documents

By Teresa Barnett, A2LA Director of Quality

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) through the “Quick Find” tool unless otherwise indicated.

- R101 – General Requirements: Accreditation of ISO/IEC 17025 Laboratories was updated on December 1, 2011.
- F122 – A2LA NEFAP FSMO Summary Table is a new document, dated December 5, 2011.
- C205 – Specific Checklist: Combined ISO/IEC 17025 and Environmental Testing Laboratory Accreditation Program was updated on December 9, 2011. Due to copyright restrictions on the text of ISO/IEC 17025, this checklist is available upon request. It is also available on the new login portal for accredited organizations.
- F228 – A2LA GEAE S400 Laboratory Consent Agreement was updated on December 15, 2011.
- P106 – Branch System Policy was updated on December 20, 2011.
- R205 – Specific Requirements: Calibration Laboratory Accreditation Program was updated on December 8, 2011. The corresponding C207 – Specific Checklist: Calibration Laboratory Accreditation Program was updated on January 27, 2012.
- P109 – Technical Consensus Decisions from the Measurement Advisory Committee (MAC) was updated on January 1, 2012.
- R308 – Specific Requirements: Telecommunication Certification Body Accreditation Program was updated on January 4, 2012.
- C313 – Specific Checklist: OFTA Hong Kong Telecommunications Certification Body Evaluation was updated on December 20, 2011.
- C314 – Specific Checklist: IDA Singapore Telecommunications Certification Body Evaluation was updated on December 20, 2011.

If you have any questions about these updates, please contact A2LA at 301 644 3248 or your Accreditation Officer directly.
A2LA announces an expansion of the types of tests that may be accredited under the Sustainable Energy field of testing to include lighting product tests, such as IES (Illuminating Engineering Society) and CIE (International Committee on Illumination) methods for LED, HID, and other Solid-State-type lighting products.


These lighting standards, and others, are called out in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ENERGY STAR Program’s new lighting product specifications for Luminaires (currently published, implementation date of April 1, 2012) and Lamps (in draft). All lighting products must be tested by EPA-recognized testing laboratories, and that test data must be reviewed and certified by recognized product certification bodies. A2LA is a recognized accrediting body for organizations interested in being recognized by the EPA for the ENERGY STAR Program, and is unique among all recognized accrediting bodies in our ability to offer “one stop shop” accreditations to both ISO/IEC 17025:2005 and ISO/IEC Guide 65:1996.

Currently accredited A2LA organizations that are interested in expanding their Scope of Accreditation to include lighting testing are encouraged to call or email their current A2LA staff contact for more information. Organizations should complete the A2LA F108 - Request for Expansion of Scope of Accreditation form for testing laboratories to initiate this Scope expansion process. Testing Scope expansion requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the applicable A2LA Accreditation Officer and the previously assigned assessor to determine whether or not the testing may be added to the current Scope or if an interim assessment is necessary.

Accredited product certification bodies must submit a request in writing to A2LA in order to expand their Scope of Accreditation, in accordance with Section XI of the A2LA General Requirements for Product Certification Bodies (http://www.a2la.org/requirements/ISO_Guide_65_Product_Certification_Body_General_Requirements.pdf). Certification body scope expansion requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis by A2LA’s Product Certification Program Manager to determine whether or not new certification schemes and an associated interim assessment are necessary.

Any applicant seeking accreditation in the Sustainable Energy field of testing will have their applications or Scope expansion requests reviewed by A2LA management to ensure that the accredited tests, and the products being tested, are in line with A2LA’s vision for this field of testing. For more information, please visit our Sustainable Energy program page at http://www.a2la.org/appsweb/susenergy.cfm, or contact Mike Buzard (mbuzard@A2LA.org or 240 575 7484).
Meeting Summary

By Peter Unger, A2LA President/CEO

Due to the tragic flooding in Bangkok, the ILAC annual meetings scheduled in November 2011 were cancelled. Since the ILAC Rules require a General Assembly meeting every calendar year, a Webinar meeting was held on December 21 in order to address those items critical for the on-going operation of ILAC.

ILAC Chair Peter Unger conducted the meeting from Sydney, Australia with the able assistance of the ILAC Secretariat staff and help from the NATA IT department. There will probably never be a shorter General Assembly meeting as this one took less than one hour, yet several important items of business were addressed.

The General Assembly confirmed the results of the electronic ballot to accept the African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC) as a regional cooperation. The Algerian Accreditation Body (ALGERAC), Belarusian State Centre for Accreditation (BSCA), Southern African Development Community Accreditation Service (SADCAS), Botswana, and Quality Management Program – Laboratory Services (QMPLS)-Canada were accepted as Associates.

Two new signatories to the ILAC Arrangement were recognized: Forensic Quality Services (FQS), USA for testing; and the Office Luxembourgeois d’Accreditation et de Surveillance (OLAS), Luxembourg for testing.

The following organizations were admitted as Affiliates:
- Afghan National Standards Authority (ANSA), Afghanistan
- Ethiopian National Accreditation Office (ENAO), Ethiopia
- Yemen Standardization Metrology and Quality Control Organization, Yemen Accreditation Scheme (YAS), Republic of Yemen
- The United Kingdom National External Quality Assessment Service (UK NEQAS), UK was admitted as a stakeholder.

The General Assembly approved the continuation of the ILAC Secretariat by NATA, Australia for a four year period beginning January 1, 2012.

The ILAC Inspection Committee was established, with Mr Lal Ilan from UKAS appointed as Chair of the ILAC Inspection Committee until the General Assembly meeting scheduled for Rio de Janeiro in October 2012.

The General Assembly expressed its appreciation for the time and effort spent by our Thai colleagues over an extended period of time in preparing to host the Fifteenth ILAC General Assembly and associated meetings, originally scheduled for November 2-11, 2011, in Bangkok, Thailand. The General Assembly further acknowledges the difficult decision taken to cancel these meetings as a result of unfortunate flooding in Thailand and wishes our Thai colleagues all the best as they recover from this crisis.

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