
American Association for
Laboratory Accreditation
Excellence in Accreditation, Commitment to Service

NELAP's NGAB Recognition Process- Perspectives of an NGAB

- Government Recognition Examples in Action
  - DoD ELAP
  - WY LAUST
- Benefits of Using NGABs
- International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation

Land of the acronyms

- ILAC-International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation
- MRA-Mutual Recognition Arrangement
- AB-Accreditation Body
- NGAB-Non-governmental accreditation body
- DoD ELAP-Department of Defense Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program
- DoD EDQW-Environmental Data Quality Workgroup
- WY LAUST-Wyoming Leaking Aboveground and Underground Storage Tank Program
- TNI FSMO – Field Sampling Measurement Organization

Government Recognition

- Government agencies can rely on accreditation bodies for:
  - Conducting the assessment processes
  - Granting the accreditations
  - Instructing and qualifying the assessors
  - Initiating adverse actions in regards to accreditation status

Government Recognition

- Accreditation bodies can tailor their programs to regulators needs by:
  - Establishing program requirements more stringent than or in addition to ISO/IEC 17025
  - Requiring more frequent proficiency testing
  - Confirming that laboratories are competent to perform specific test methods
  - Requiring specific personnel qualifications (i.e. registered engineer as Technical Director, advanced degree for a Quality Manager or Technical Manager)
  - Enabling varying degrees of oversight by the government entity based on their comfort level

DoD ELAP Background

- December 2008, Assistant Deputy Under the Secretary of Defense (Environmental, Safety and Occupation Health) issued a memorandum to establish DoD ELAP using DoD EDQW for oversight
- DoD ELAP established in October 2009
- Effective October 2009 laboratories seeking to perform testing in support of Defense Environmental Restoration Program must be accredited in accordance with DoD ELAP

DoD ELAP Program

- All labs are assessed to ISO/IEC 17025:2005 as the base standard
- The requirements of 2009 TNI Requirements and the DoD QSM version 5.0 are used
- Labs are assessed to ILAC policies
- Accreditation meets the requirements of the ILAC MRA and meets the needs of a US government specifier
- Labs can also be assessed to other specifiers' requirements using one assessment (i.e. TNI FSMO, AOAC, CPSC, FL, WY LAUST, KY UST etc.)

DoD Oversight of AB

- DoD EDQW receives all assessment reports
- AB's provide DoD EDQW with monthly status reports
- DoD EDQW can observe on-site assessments
- Regular teleconferences with recognized ABs
- Annual face-to-face meeting with ABs
- Observe ILAC peer evaluation process
- Participates in the AB's annual assessor training

DoD ELAP favored ILAC ABs

- Shifts expense from DOD to private sector
- Timely assessments and deliverables
- The ILAC ABs have full time staff that can support the timely review of assessment reports and CARs and other accreditation administration services
- Use of technical experts that are trained to conduct thorough, efficient and effective on-site assessments

DoD ELAP/EDQW Roles

- Performs accreditation body oversight functions
- Provides project management support
- Program maintenance / update criteria

WY DEQ Background

- March 2001, the WY DEQ Leaking Aboveground and Underground Storage Tank (LAUST) Program notified laboratories that they would implement the Policy Number 35
- Policy 35 requires WDEQ to establish accreditation criteria under the LAUST Remediation Program
- Labs wishing to continue work under the LAUST must become accredited by December 31, 2001

Wyoming DEQ

- All labs are assessed to ISO/IEC 17025:2005 as the base standard
- Wyoming DEQ established requirements above ISO/ IEC 17025:2005 to meet WY specific needs
- Labs are assessed to A2LA (ILAC) policies
- Accreditation meets the requirements of the ILAC MRA and meets the needs of a state specifier

Program Oversight of AB

- Wyoming informs A2LA when program requirements are to be updated
- A2LA maintains a list of accredited laboratories

WY DEQ Roles

- Laboratories submit application for certification for the WY program to WY DEQ
- Laboratories provide proof of current accreditation
- Certification is valid for two years

Benefits to Government Agencies

- Agencies maintain oversight of their programs
- Less funding required to operate a laboratory approval program
- Government personnel can focus more time on permitting, program/project management and oversight
- Access to experts in a wide variety of environmental disciplines without burden of full time positions

AB Benefits over 3rd Party Auditor

- Ability to make accreditation decisions including adverse actions
- Well established databases to monitor accreditation activities
- Breadth of accreditation programs and experiences
- Financial resources
- Depth in staffing
- Multiple review levels and checks

Laboratory Benefits

- Laboratories can use their ILAC accreditation for other customers and users beyond that of the states
- Timely assessment cycles
- One stop shop-can apply the ISO/IEC 17025 standard to other technical disciplines and even be assessed to other ISO standards
- Marketing advantage
- Efficient means to expand Scopes of Accreditation

ILAC Accreditation

- ILAC – International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation
- International structure used to recognize accreditation bodies
- System to evaluate accreditation bodies against ISO/IEC 17011
- All ILAC Accreditation Bodies accredit testing and calibration laboratories to ISO/IEC 17025

ISO/IEC 17011:2004

- Impartiality
- Confidentiality
- Requires ABs to have a management system – instills accountability
- Human resources – requirements for staff, assessors, decision makers and requirements for monitoring performance
- Requirements for assessment, accreditation and adverse actions processes

Accreditation Process

- On-site assessments to evaluate management system implementation and technical competency
- Requires on-going checks of competence through monitoring of laboratory's proficiency testing participation
- AB *may* even incorporate a "Desk audit" of records during year that no on-site assessment occurs

Assessor Evaluation

- Staff reviews each assessor report for completeness and validity of cited deficiencies
- The Accreditation Council has the opportunity to comment on the thoroughness of the assessment performed
- Assessors are evaluated by A2LA staff during on site assessments on a regular basis
- Assessors begin as technical assessors and must pass evaluations before they can become lead assessors

TNI Recognition Process- Streamline

- Rely on ILAC Peer Evaluation Results
- Send a TNI representative to witness the ILAC Evaluation
- Combine the evaluation efforts of TNI NELAP, NEFAP, PTPA evaluations
- Ongoing monitoring if desired

Business Requirements

In today's business climate, accreditation bodies must be dynamic and responsive to a laboratory's changing business needs

– by providing prompt customer service

– skilled assessors current in testing technologies

– solid management system framework to ensure integrity throughout process

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Questions

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