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# LQAP NEWS

April 2008 Issue

## 2008 LQAP Accreditation Policy Changes Published

*Changes Effective May 1*

In February 2008, AIHA published revised Accreditation Policy Modules. These changes were adopted in direct response to requests from members of the LQAP community who submitted policy suggestion forms. Suggestions were considered by the Policy Task Force and ultimately were approved by the Analytical Accreditation Board (AAB). **Policy revisions will become effective on May 1, 2008.**

Check the LQAP web page for a PDF and a “track changes” file for each of these revised modules.

### *Module 2A – General Management System Requirements*

The term “quality assurance coordinator” has been changed to “quality manager” throughout the policies. In addition, appropriate documentation of training in statistics or laboratory quality assurance/quality control has been clarified to include at least one of the following:

1. College level course in statistics;
2. Continuing education in laboratory QA/QC (e.g., AIHA or equivalent course); or
3. Relevant experience — documented examples of the level of QA/QC used in applicable workplace experience.

### *Module 2B – IHLAP Specific Additional Requirements*

For PCM analysis, the general round robin requirements of Module 6 apply.

### *Module 2C – ELLAP Specific Additional Requirements*

The reporting of zero concentration is not permitted, so ELLAP laboratories shall only report levels below the method reporting limit as “<” (less than) and reference the reporting limit.

### *Module 2D – EMLAP Specific Additional Requirements*

Under personnel requirements for laboratory technicians and analysts have been modified. As with the other modules, the “quality assurance coordinator” was changed to “quality manager,” and there are no additional requirements above the general requirements in Module 2A.

### *Module 3 – Accreditation, Maintenance, and Rec accreditation Processes*

With the change in the accreditation period from three years to two years, the annual update requirement has been eliminated since AIHA receives contact and personnel information more frequently. Since this requirement was lifted, it is more important than ever for laboratories to report significant changes to AIHA staff within 20 business days. We want to ensure that we have the correct contact information so that we can provide efficient service.

The changes clarify that accredited laboratories interested in adding a new field of testing (FoT) shall determine how competency for that FoT will be demonstrated. In addition, competency is required to be demonstrated prior to applying for the new FoT.

### *Module 4 – Suspension, Revocation, or Denial of Accreditation*

Editorial changes are reflected in this section.

### AIHA Laboratory Quality Assurance Programs

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## EPA Publishes Revisions to Lead Program Requirements

EPA has revised and updated the Laboratory Quality System Requirements (LQSR) for their National Lead Laboratory Accreditation Program (NLLAP). Revision 3 was finalized on July 5, 2007 and released in the first quarter of 2008. Several of the highlights are listed below, with a more detailed analysis and impact on AIHA programs coming in future newsletters.

Much of the revision is directed toward the field portable devices and one-person labs, making it easier for them to become accredited.

Below is a partial list of the changes from Revision 2 to Revision 3:

- The latest revision has been altered to reflect the same structure as ISO/IEC 17025. Many of the requirements of the LQSR R3 are aligned closely with ISO/IEC 17025, and this new layout makes comparisons much easier.
- Requirements for technical manager (TM) no longer include college degrees, three years non-academic analytical chemistry experience and 50 percent on-site time. The technical manager position can now be contracted out, which was not allowed under Revision 2.
- Changes have been made to the quality manager (QM) to align with ISO/IEC 17025.
- There are no requirements for laboratory supervisors.
- If a laboratory has only one person, that person can be the TM or the QM but not both. One of those positions must be contracted out.
- One-person labs can conduct their own internal audits, but they must follow a third party guideline such as ISO 19011 and create a written record; or they can contract that responsibility out.
- Records only have to be retained for five years now, instead of ten.

AIHA will be implementing these changes slowly over the next 18 months to help laboratories ease the transition. If you have questions regarding the LQSR, please contact Cheryl Morton at [cmorton@aiha.org](mailto:cmorton@aiha.org) or Scott Goeringer at [sgoeringer@aiha.org](mailto:sgoeringer@aiha.org).

## Additional EMLAP Site Assessors Sought

AIHA is seeking applications from individuals with laboratory backgrounds and expertise in mycology who may be interested in serving as site assessors for the Environmental Microbiology Laboratory Accreditation Program. All qualified candidates who ideally should be experienced or trained in ISO/IEC 17025:2005 and/or quality management systems, will be considered. For more information or to obtain an application, please contact Margie Breida at [mbreida@aiha.org](mailto:mbreida@aiha.org).

## 2008 LQAP Accreditation Policy Changes Published

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### Module 9 – Terms and Acronyms

The definition of analytical sensitivity was revised (see below) to clarify and a definition was added for “quality manager.”

“Analytical Sensitivity - The lowest concentration that can be detected by the method, based upon the amount or portion of sample analyzed (e.g., for methods involving a count = 1 raw count per amount or portion of sample analyzed, calculated and expressed in the final reporting units).”

In addition to the highlights listed above, please check the new policies for additional changes. If you have any questions, please contact Margie Breida at [mbreida@aiha.org](mailto:mbreida@aiha.org) or Heather Thompson at [hthompson@aiha.org](mailto:hthompson@aiha.org).

To receive notification when the *LQAP News* is published, please send an e-mail to [LQAPNewsletter@aiha.org](mailto:LQAPNewsletter@aiha.org). The subject line should be “OPT-IN” the body should contain your lab number. You can opt-out at any time by using the “OPT-OUT” option after you receive your first notification e-mail.

## AIHA to Pursue IAAC Recognition

AIHA’s Board of Governors approved a motion on February 29 that will allow AIHA to formally pursue international recognition for its laboratory accreditation programs under the Inter-American Accreditation Cooperation and continue its full membership in the Asia Pacific Laboratory Cooperation.

This motion was based on a recommendation presented to the Board by the Analytical Accreditation Board which is convinced that IAAC recognition is a more cost effective approach to be recognized under a mutual recognition arrangement especially now that IAAC is a cooperative region under the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation. We expect to submit the application for MLA recognition by the end of the year.

AIHA became a full member of APLAC in December 2006 and a full member of IAAC in August 2007, and, was represented at the General Assemblies of both organizations in 2007. Both meetings were found to be extremely informative and allowed AIHA to establish dialogues with accreditation bodies from around the world. AIHA will continue both full memberships in 2008 but only seek recognition by IAAC.

Global recognition for AIHA’s accredited laboratories in the industrial hygiene, environmental lead, and environmental microbiology programs is a goal established by the AIHA Board at least five years ago. This recognition will demonstrate that AIHA has the staff, resources, and quality management systems in place to comply with ISO/IEC 17011 (the international standard for accreditation bodies) and that AIHA can compete worldwide. For our laboratory customers who are already complying the ISO/IEC 17025:2005, most of the work has already been done and AIHA does not expect to implement a significant number of policy changes as we pursue this recognition.

For more information, please contact Cheryl O. Morton, at [cmorton@aiha.org](mailto:cmorton@aiha.org)

## New AAR Application Requirement – Quality System Training

Since the release of the 2008 revisions of Asbestos Analyst Registry Policy document and application, AIHA has received many questions regarding the Quality System Training (QST) attachment for analyst applications.

This new requirement comes from AAR Policy, Article II, Section 2.2.3, Quality System Training, “The organization shall document the analyst’s training in the organization’s QA/QC program. Analysts shall be trained in-house as outlined in the most current edition of the *AIHA Laboratory Quality Assurance Manual for Industrial Hygiene Chemistry*, Chapter 11.” Chapter 11, section 11.4.6 of the *AIHA Laboratory Quality Assurance Manual*, states “Each analyst should receive training equivalent to the NIOSH 582 course “Sampling and Evaluating Airborne Asbestos Dust.” Before analyzing any field samples, a new analyst should be monitored for at least a two-week probationary period. During this time, the new analyst must demonstrate his or her ability to meet the established QA guidelines of NIOSH Method No. 7400 and the laboratory or organization.”

Although your analyst has successfully completed the NIOSH 582 equivalency course, an organization should seek to determine that the analyst will give quality results. Even seasoned analysts need a probationary period when they are first hired to ensure that their analytical practices and quality control procedures mirror those of the organization.

The Quality System Training attachment of the AAR application should demonstrate the training of your analyst during their probationary period. If your organization does not currently have a training form, you will need to develop one to remain in compliance with the AAR policies. This form does not need to be complicated, but must document your analysts’ training. A date of the training or completion of the training element is sufficient. Their training should include, but not be limited to, the analyst reading the NIOSH 7400 Method, reading the organization’s quality manual, demonstrating the ability to prepare a sample with a smooth (non-grainy) background, and demonstrating an understanding of the NIOSH 7400 method’s and the organization’s quality practices:

- Microscope alignment;
- Microscope calibration;
- Determination of graticule area;
- Understanding of the NIOSH 7400 method counting rules;
- The ability to calculate the fiber density (fibers/mm<sup>2</sup>) and the concentration (fibers/cc) of the data from sample analysis;
- Successful analysis of reference slides (slides read with precision); and
- Successful analysis of recounts (slides read without bias).

For analysts who were hired prior to this requirement and prior to your organization developing training documentation, a signed cover letter or statement that the analyst has read your organization’s quality manual, the NIOSH 7400 method and has demonstrated their understanding of the above quality practices, will be sufficient for attachment QST.

AIHA appreciates your continued participation in the Asbestos Analysts Registry. For more information, please contact Carter Dezio, AAR program specialist, at [cdezio@aiha.org](mailto:cdezio@aiha.org) or (703) 846-0798.

## Call for AAB and TAP Applications

AIHA is seeking qualified volunteers to fill soon-to-be-open positions on the LQAP Analytical Accreditation Board (AAB) and the Technical Advisory Panel (TAP).

The AAB oversees the governance and processes related to LQAP. AAB members are also responsible for approving applications submitted for accreditation and reaccreditation once site assessments are conducted. AAB members are required to attend meetings at least three times annually: one in February, one in conjunction with AIHce, and one in conjunction with PCIH. AIHA covers all reasonable and customary expenses for attendance at these meetings.

TAP members advise the AAB on technical laboratory matters and review 15 percent of all accreditation applications that AIHA receives for the asbestos analysts registry and accreditation programs (industrial hygiene, environmental lead, and environmental microbiology).

For their assigned program areas, TAP members conduct a thorough assessment of the accreditation process steps to ensure conformance to policies and technical requirements. TAP members are required to attend the annual LQAP training meeting which is generally held in February.

Applications (who must be completed and submitted to AIHA by June 30) and other information about both AAB and TAP qualifications and duties can be found on the AIHA website under “Documents, Policies, Fees.”

For more information, contact Margie Breida at [mbreida@aiha.org](mailto:mbreida@aiha.org).

## LQAP Activities at AIHce Minneapolis

AIHce will provide staff and volunteers the opportunity to discuss topics of interest to the laboratory community. Among the planned activities are the AAB meeting (Sat., May 31), the LQAP Reception (Mon., June 2), and LQAP’s presence in the AIHA Booth in the Exhibit Hall (Mon., June 2–Wed., June 4).

In addition, AIHce offers professional development courses and technical sessions that may interest you. Session topics include sampling and laboratory analysis, laboratory health and safety, biosafety, indoor environmental quality, and the industrial hygiene value proposition. Search the education program by topic, day or session type at [www.aiha.org/aihce08/education/default.aspx](http://www.aiha.org/aihce08/education/default.aspx).

## Interested in Applying for Laboratory Accreditation?

The LQAP Analytical Accreditation Board is sponsoring a **Laboratory Accreditation Course** in conjunction with AIHce in Minneapolis on Sunday and Monday, June 1–2, 2008. Ronald H. Peters, CIH, president of Peters Consulting (and AIHA's chief site assessor) is the instructor.

This two-day course is designed for laboratory professionals interested in learning more about ISO/IEC 17025:2005 and applying for accreditation under AIHA's laboratory quality assurance programs.

Participants receive an overview of AIHA programs and the accreditation process. Quality system requirements and documentation, including changes resulting from ISO/IEC 17025:2005, are highlighted. Participants have an opportunity to ask questions regarding AIHA accreditation and application requirements for the Industrial Hygiene, Environmental Lead, and Environmental Microbiology Accreditation Programs.

Information presented in the course is designed to reduce the time required to complete the accreditation application and to avoid delays resulting from application deficiencies.

Although this course is offered in conjunction with AIHce, it is not necessary to register for the conference to attend this course. For more information, visit [www.aiha.org/aihce08/education/special-courses.aspx](http://www.aiha.org/aihce08/education/special-courses.aspx).

## LQAP Orientation and Training Held in Tampa

Members of AIHA's Laboratory Quality Assurance Programs gathered in Tampa for an orientation and training session. Some highlights include:

- AIHA's site assessors met and discussed scope of accreditation, applications, root cause investigations, estimation of uncertainty policy, AIHA policy changes, and received EMLAP training.
- New TAP and AAB members received an orientation on roles and responsibilities and the accreditation process.
- A general session for the TAP, AAB, and site assessors covered policy changes, new tools for document sharing for volunteers, updates on the new LQSR, and clarifications on ISO/IEC 17025 requirements.
- LQAP's PT and EMLAP Task Forces took the opportunity to meet to discuss issues concerning their activities.

For more information about the February 2008 orientation and training session, contact Margie Breida at [mbreida@aiha.org](mailto:mbreida@aiha.org).

## Congratulations to AIHA's Newly Accredited Labs

101695	Navy Env. & Prev. Medicine Unit 5 Consolidated Industrial Hygiene Lab (San Diego)	IHLAP ELLAP	Reaccredited Newly accredited
100530	AmeriSci Los Angeles (Carson, Calif.)	IHLAP ELLAP EMLAP	Newly accredited Reaccredited Reaccredited
178889	NASA Johnson Space Ctr Microbiology Lab (Houston)	EMLAP	Newly accredited
181602	Lawrence Environmental Group (New York)	ELLAP	Newly accredited
183867	Clean Air Laboratories (Oak Ridge, Tenn. )	EMLAP	Newly accredited
157714	J3 Resources, Inc. (Houston)	IHLAP EMLAP	Newly accredited Newly accredited
167620	Aemtek, Inc. (Fremont, Calif.)	ELLAP	Newly accredited

## Annual Update Eliminated – Significant Changes Still Need to be Reported

Although the annual update is no longer required in the 2008 policies, reporting of significant changes per 3.8.1 is still required within 20 business days. The following changes need to be reported to AIHA staff:

- Personnel changes that include technical manager and quality manager (now that the quality assurance coordinator title has been changed to quality manager). Check Policy 2A.5 and the specifics of your accreditation program to ensure that these positions fulfill the qualifications outlined.
- Facility location and/or ownership – Not only is it required by Policy 3.8.1, but your accreditation covers only the laboratory as named on the certification of accreditation and the facility address as listed.

Help us keep you current. If your laboratory is not receiving its proficiency testing samples, the *LQAP News*, or general correspondence, please contact us to verify your address and primary/billing contact.

If you have any accreditation questions, please contact Heather Thompson at [hthompson@aiha.org](mailto:hthompson@aiha.org).

# LQAP Web Survey Results Are In

By Cheryl O. Morton

From September – December 2007, AIHA conducted a web-based survey of its existing LQAP customers to help determine: 1) satisfaction with existing programs, 2) usage and satisfaction with competitive programs, 3) areas of laboratory services might be of interest, and 4) the value placed by LQAP customers on international recognition.

We are pleased to report that 38 percent of our current laboratory customers (310 laboratories) participated in the survey. Having reviewed the results, AIHA has conducted a detailed statistical analysis of the results to the survey. The following is a list of highlights from that analysis:

- **More than half** of the LQAP accreditation customers presently or previously enrolled in accreditation programs reported that they were satisfied with our services. Of the customers presently or previously enrolled in LQAP proficiency services, **76 percent** reported being satisfied with our PAT programs.
- In comparing AIHA accreditation with that of other bodies, **40 percent** of the LQAP customers reported that the AIHA accreditation effort was greater than that required for the other

programs. Still, when asked about the amount of overall effort necessary to maintain AIHA accreditation in relation to the benefits received from the accreditation, **54 percent** reported that the “effort was equivalent to the benefits received.”

- When asked about new AIHA registries, **22 percent** indicated they would be interested in a registry for analysts with field-portable services while **18 percent** said they would be interested in a registry for professional IH lab chemists/analysts.
- At least **25 percent** of labs expressed interest in quality management system and some **21 percent** were interested in AIHA accreditation tutorial and preparation for AIHA site assessments.
- Finally, respondents placed “major” (**17 percent**) and “moderate importance” (**28 percent**) on international recognition.

As LQAP director, I will be working with AIHA’s executive office and the AAB to review, revise, and develop new programs around these survey results. We thank our laboratory customers for taking the time to participate in the survey and

congratulate the three winners of the iPods® that were raffled off as a part of this survey. For more information about the survey, please contact Cheryl O. Morton at [cmorton@aiha.org](mailto:cmorton@aiha.org).

## LQAP Staff Moves

Angela Oler, laboratory accreditation specialist for the past two years, accepted the position of project coordinator with AIHA’s Scientific and Technical Initiatives Group. She will be working with AIHA’s committees and volunteer groups.

LQAP welcomes Olena Bulgakova as the new laboratory accreditation specialist. Olena comes to AIHA with five years of accredited laboratory experience, and her primary responsibility at AIHA will be accreditation application processing. Olena can be reached at [obulgakova@aiha.org](mailto:obulgakova@aiha.org) or (703) 846-0792.

## Mark Your Calendars

Keep the following deadlines in mind, and in your calendar, for 2008

### Industrial Hygiene Proficiency Analytical Testing Program Enrollment Deadlines

June 1, 2008 (Round 174)  
September 1, 2008 (Round 175)  
December 1, 2008 (Round 176)

### Bulk Asbestos Proficiency Analytical Testing Program Enrollment Deadlines

April 25, 2008 (Round 75)  
July 25, 2008 (Round 76)  
October 15, 2008 (Round 77)

### Beryllium Proficiency Analytical Testing Program Enrollment Deadlines

June 1, 2008 (Round 17)  
October 1, 2008 (Round 18)

### Environmental Lead Proficiency Analytical Testing Program Enrollment Deadlines

July 15, 2008 (Round 64)  
October 15, 2008 (Round 65)

### Environmental Lead-Air Proficiency Analytical Testing Program Enrollment Deadlines

June 1, 2008 (Round 64)  
September 1, 2008 (Round 65)  
December 1, 2008 (Round 66)

### Environmental Microbiology-Culturable Proficiency Analytical Testing Program Enrollment Deadlines

May 15, 2008 (Round 36)  
September 15, 2008 (Round 37)

### Environmental Microbiology-Direct Exam Proficiency Analytical Testing Program Enrollment Deadlines

June 15, 2008 (Round 16)  
September 15, 2008 (Round 17)  
December 15, 2008 (Round 18)

### Environmental Microbiology-Culturable and Direct Exam Combination Proficiency Analytical Testing Program Enrollment Deadlines

May 15, 2008 (Round 15 and 36)  
September 15, 2008 (Round 16 and 37)  
December 15, 2008 (Round 17 and 38)

### Asbestos Analysts Registry Enrollment Deadlines

May 15, 2008 (Round 86)  
August 18, 2008 (Round 87)  
November 17, 2008 (Round 88)