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L Q A P N E W S

July/August 2007 Issue

Asbestos Analysts Registry (AAR) Policy Revised

By Carter Dezio

The Analytical Accreditation Board worked in conjunction with the Technical Advisory Panel and the AAR program specialist to revise the AAR Policy document in its entirety. The revised policies are now available on the AIHA website and the revision will be effective on January 1, 2008. Please take a moment to read the policy revision so that you will have an understanding of what will need to be updated in your quality practices to become compliant with the policies.

This is a comprehensive and detailed revision to the AAR Policy document that serves to both clarify the requirements of the AAR program and the process of organization and analyst application and listing on the registry. Minor changes were made throughout the document. The major changes, summarized below, are in Article II, Article III, Article IV, and Article VII.

All approved organizations and registered analysts must be compliant with these policies by the effective date, January 1, 2008.

- The major changes of note in Article II are the addition of a section regarding the analyst's probationary period, a more clear definition of the analyst's affiliation to the organization and a section which more clearly explains the expectations for your organization's quality manual and quality control procedures.

- Article III has been expanded to include policies for all stages of the Asbestos Analysts Testing proficiency program. Additionally, with the effective date of this policy revision, the AAR program will be offering, for purchase, older rounds of AAT samples of QC or practice, while supplies last. This is currently offered for our Proficiency Analytical Testing samples, as stock samples, but will be a new offering for AAT samples.
- Article IV will now include the listing process for organizations seeking initial listing, analysts seeking initial listing, and analysts seeking a transfer or reinstatement of their listing. Previously, Article IV did not include the process for each type of enrollment separately. The listing process for each type of enrollment is now outlined in greater, and more specific, detail.

• Article III and Article IV both include sections on a new type of enrollment for AAR analysts, the expedited analyst application.

This listing process and AAT participation will allow analysts to become Analytical Accreditation Board approved in half the time it now takes for analysts to become board-approved. The application approval process will be expedited and the analyst will have the opportunity to gain proficiency in the AAT program in one AAT round, by using the round and retest round as the two rounds needed to determine proficiency.

- Article VII includes an expansion to the advertising policy to include verbiage for use by board-approved analysts. Please be sure to read this

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The Difference Between AIHA Accreditation, AAR Registration, and PAT Participation

By Pete Dragasakis

Many customers that use laboratory services are unclear about the differences between AIHA accreditation, AAR Registration, and AIHA PAT participation. Because some of the laboratory participants in these programs also do not clearly understand the differences, this adds to the confusion felt by the end user of laboratory services. Understanding these differences is extremely important in order to ensure that your customers are fully aware of your credentials and ensure that you are not confronted with any legal action for misrepresenting these credentials in advertising and reports. Below we look at these important differences to ensure that we can accurately communicate your LQAP participation to your customers.

Proficiency Analytical Testing

We look first at Proficiency Analytical Testing participation. The various proficiency testing programs offered by AIHA all work in the same manner, so we do not make any distinctions about specific programs in this discussion. In all cases, participants receive samples on a regular schedule from AIHA, evaluate the challenges, submit their results by the deadline, and receive a score and a proficiency rating at the end of the testing round.

While this is an important aspect of laboratory quality control, it is imperative that participants understand that proficient participation in a PAT program **is not** equivalent to accreditation. In addition, participation **shall not** be referenced as either certification or registration.

Participation in AIHA PAT does not imply AIHA recognition or endorsement of laboratory services. While AIHA reviews overall results in the PAT programs, individual lab proficiency is not monitored by AIHA unless a lab is also accredited or seeking accreditation, or is involved in the AAR program. Therefore, if advertising participation, the laboratory must not imply accreditation. LQAP Policy 7.4 states: "A laboratory may use its Laboratory ID Number to indicate participation in one or more AIHA PT programs, as long as accreditation is not implied, for example: '___ Laboratory participates in the AIHA ___PAT Program, Laboratory ID Number ___.'" Laboratories should avoid stating just, for example, "AIHA IHPAT # ___" as it does not make clear to an ordinary customer that they are only a PAT participant.

As noted above, AIHA accreditation requires more than proficient PAT participation, although this is a prerequisite. AIHA accreditation requires an application which is reviewed by both AIHA staff and site assessors prior to a detailed on-site assessment by the assigned site assessor which covers ISO 17025 and additional AIHA requirements. Only after the assessment and possible technical review of the assessment results by the Technical Advisory Panel is a laboratory sent to the Analytical Accreditation Board for final approval of accreditation.

Additionally, labs are required to undergo this process every two years to maintain accreditation. Laboratories must

receive official notification of their accreditation and sign a licensing agreement before they are able to reference their accreditation and use the Accredited Laboratory logo. A certificate and scope of accreditation page is also sent to all accredited laboratories and they are listed on the accredited laboratory listing on the AIHA website. Unless you have an official notification of accreditation and a certificate and scope page displaying your accreditation, you should not reference AIHA accreditation.

Asbestos Analyst Registry

Finally, the Asbestos Analyst Registry is a registry program for fiber counting analysts run by AIHA. This program does require an organization application which is reviewed for compliance with AAR policies, and site assessment is required. In addition, each analyst that wishes to be registered in the AAR must belong to a recognized organization and submit an application that is thoroughly reviewed by AIHA staff and the TAP before being sent to the AAB for final board-approval. Once approved, analysts are listed on the AAR Board Approved Analyst listing on the AIHA website. Organizations must ensure that they are claiming only that they are an AAR listed organization. Claims of accreditation are false.

If you have any questions about how to accurately reference your LQAP participation, please do not hesitate to contact Pete Dragasakis at pdragasakis@aiha.org for additional details.

Asbestos Analysts Registry (AAR) Policy Revised

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section carefully to ensure that your organization and its affiliated analysts remain compliant with this policy.

The revised AAR policy document can be found at <http://www.aiha.org/Content/LQAP/documents/documents.htm>. A copy of the revision in "track changes" as well as a cross-reference table detailing changes between 2003 and 2008 policy versions are online.

Although the changes may seem wide-scale, if your organization and its affiliated analysts are following the NIOSH 7400

method, you will find there are few changes, if any, that need to be made to your quality system. All approved organizations and registered analysts must be compliant with these policies by the effective date, January 1, 2008. The AAR may request a separate submission that asks for evidence of compliance after this effective date. A revision to the AAR application will be posted shortly, that will also be effective on January 1, 2008. If you have questions, please contact the Carter Dezio at (703) 846-0798 or cdezio@aiha.org.

LQAP Has New Web Address

AIHA laboratory customers (and their customers) can now go directly to LQAP web pages by using the following newly-registered web address: www.aihalqap.org.

You can still access LQAP information by going to the AIHA web site (www.aiha.org) and clicking on Laboratory Programs in the far left corner.

Reminder on Importance of LQAP Feedback Forms and Customer Service Survey

An important component to ensuring continual improvement of LQAP operations and management system is to solicit and receive feedback from all interested parties, be it internal or external to the operations. Two tools used to do this are the LQAP feedback forms from the site assessments and the upcoming customer service survey.

LQAP Feedback Forms: AIHA currently solicits feedback from all accredited laboratories following each assessment. Accredited laboratories are sent an LQAP feedback form when they are notified about the assignment of their application to an assessor. The assessor is asked to also provide the lab the feedback form at the assessment itself. This allows the labo-

ratory to rate and comment on the site assessment process, the accreditation, and proficiency testing programs. In addition, LQAP continues to record and respond to complaints and suggestions received from all its participants, and customers of its participants on a continuing basis.

The feedback received is reviewed not only at the time of receipt, but also as part of periodic management reviews for trends and common concerns. We strongly encourage laboratories to submit this feedback form, or e-mail any LQAP staff member in order to ensure that we are aware of your impressions of our programs.

Customer Service Survey: To receive even more feedback from LQAP partici-

pants, AIHA is also currently working on a broader customer satisfaction survey (the most recent one was conducted in 2003). The 2003 study provided information that led to positive changes which affected how AIHA delivers service to its laboratory customers today. While we fully expect that the 2007 survey will show a vast improvement in the customer service we provide, we hope that everyone will answer honestly and constructively so we can continue to improve our programs.

Should you have any questions, or wish to provide feedback at any time, please contact Cheryl O. Morton, at cmorton@aiha.org, Scott Goeringer at sgoeringer@aiha.org, or Pete Dragasakis at (pdragasakis@aiha.org).

Participation at AIHce Honors Volunteers and Promotes LQAP

This year's AIHce in Philadelphia presented LQAP staff and volunteers with numerous opportunities to discuss important issues, learn about accreditation programs, and celebrate LQAP achievements:

- **AAB Meeting:** The Analytical Accreditation Board met on June 3 to discuss critical issues including plans for developing a program for field operations and policy matters raised by AAB task forces. The AAB also reviewed some sample AIHA accreditation logos and discussed the rollout of the new logos later this year. In the executive session, the AAB also approved **Pamela Kostle** as its vice chair for a term that begins in 2008.
- **Exhibit Booths:** The LQAP exhibit booth was on display at the expo hall on June 4–6 where LQAP staff was available to answer questions about accreditation and PAT programs. AIHA-accredited laboratories and those participating in PAT programs had information booths on display and were each visited by LQAP staff who solicited feedback on AIHA programs.
- **Accreditation Course:** AIHA's Chief Site Assessor **Ronald Peters** (Peters Consulting) conducted a two-day laboratory accreditation course on June 3–4 that focused on the process for receiving AIHA accreditation and the requirements of the new ISO 17025: 2005 standard.
- **LQAP Reception:** LQAP hosted a reception on Monday, June 5 where LQAP volunteers, site assessors and others from laboratory community were in attendance. AAB Chair James Kenny presented the Harriotte A. Hurley Award for AAB Member of the Year to AAB Vice Chair **Laura McMahan**. He also presented the Newton Whitman Award for TAP Reviewer of the Year to **Michael Mueller**. This year's Evan Campbell Award for LQAP Site Assessor of the Year was given to **James Nelson**.
- **AIHA Volunteer Reception:** LQAP volunteers also participated in AIHA's Volunteer Recognition Reception on June 6 where Laura McMahan and Mike Mueller were honored again by AIHA President Frank Renshaw.

Congratulations to this year's award winners!

Required Annual Update Past Due

All accredited laboratories and Asbestos Analyst Registry organizations were sent an e-mail from AIHA in mid-May notifying them that an electronic annual update submission was required by June 30, 2007. As of publication, many labs have not replied.

Because the update is electronic this year, a username/password combo will be required to log-in and complete the update. The May e-mail included this information for each organization. If you have not submitted an update, a paper notification will be arriving in the mail.

If you do not receive the letter and log-in information, please contact either Peter Dragasakis at pdragasakis@aiha.org for accredited laboratory update information or Carter Dezio at cdezio@aiha.org for AAR update information. Completion of the update is a requirement for both Accreditation and AAR policies.

Thank you to all laboratories that have already completed the update, and thanks in advance to those that will submit in the coming weeks.

LQAP Staff Addition

AIHA welcomes Jennifer Redmond, the new laboratory accreditation specialist in LQAP. She replaces Alex Reeder who left AIHA. Jennifer brings laboratory experience to this position having worked as a study technician at Covance Laboratories for the past two years. Jennifer has bachelor degrees in biology and psychology from Virginia Tech. She can be reached at jredmond@aiha.org.

AIHA Launches New Logo and Tagline

The American Industrial Hygiene Association has redesigned its logo and brand position. The unveiling, which took place at AIHce in Philadelphia, marks the final phase of a two-year effort that has involved volunteers from committee and local chapter leadership and other stakeholder groups, including the Academy of Industrial Hygiene and the American Industrial Hygiene Foundation.

Accompanying the new look is a new tagline, "Protecting worker health," which was approved by the AIHA Board of Directors as a means to clearly communicate the most essential role of industrial hygienists, in particular, to a growing number

of external audiences including allied professions, government, media, and business leaders. In combination, the logo and tagline support the AIHA strategic objective of international outreach.

LQAP staff is now coordinating with designers to develop new LQAP accreditation logos that incorporate the new AIHA branding. Look for a roll out of new LQAP accreditation logos by the fall. Digital copies of the logos will be issued to all laboratories for advertising purposes.

For more information about the AIHA logo or the soon-to-be developed accreditation logos, please contact Pete Dragasakis at pdragasakis@aiha.org.

CareerAdvantage Now Accepting Internship Postings and Listing Internships

CareerAdvantage, AIHA's employment portal, now includes internship postings. The cost is \$75, a significant discount over normal employment posting rates. If your laboratory actively seeks interns for work during the summer or the school year, this resource may help you broaden your search.

CareerAdvantage is open to AIHA members and nonmembers. For more information, visit www.aiha.org and click on "Career and Employment Services" or contact Wanda Barbour at (703) 846-0782 or wbarbour@aiha.org.

AAB Elections to Be Electronic Again

To expedite the election of the members of the Analytical Accreditation Board, the 2007 AAB election will be held electronically this year following the successful use of electronic voting process to conduct the 2006 AAB election.

Working with Votenet, a nationally recognized e-balloting company that offers a safe, secure web-based voting system, AIHA-accredited laboratories will be able to use their laboratory identification number to login in and vote. Look for the e-ballot, which will be sent out electronically, on or around September 24, with a voting closing date on or around October 15. If you do not receive an electronic ballot by September 30, please contact a member of the LQAP staff to ensure that we have your correct e-mail address.

The AAB is comprised of 14 members, each serving three-year terms (with the exception of the ex-officio representatives and board officers). Members of the AAB oversee the governance and processes related to LQAP in accordance with documented roles and responsibilities. The AAB also selects the members of the Technical Advisory Panel (TAP), which provides expertise on all technical aspects of LQAP activities.

For more information on the upcoming AAB elections, please contact Cheryl O. Morton at (703) 846-0789 or cmorton@aiha.org.

Mark Your Calendars

Please keep these dates that each PT kit ships on your calendar and notify AIHA if you do not receive your samples. Enrollment deadlines can be located in the 2007 LQAP Fee Schedule.

Industrial Hygiene Proficiency Analytical Testing Program (IHPAT)

171 October 1, 2007

* Includes Diffusive Samplers

Environmental Lead Proficiency Analytical Testing Program (ELPAT) (Air)

61 October 1, 2007

Environmental Lead Proficiency Analytical Testing Program (ELPAT) (Paint, Soil, Dust)

60 August 1, 2007

61 November 1, 2007

Bulk Asbestos Proficiency Analytical Testing Program (BAPAT)

72 August 15, 2007

73 November 15, 2007

Beryllium Proficiency Analytical Testing Program (BePAT)

15 November 1, 2007

Environmental Microbiology Proficiency Analytical Testing Program (EMPAT) (Culturable)

34 October 1, 2007

Environmental Microbiology Proficiency Analytical Testing Program (EMPAT) (Direct Exam)

12 October 8, 2007

Asbestos Analytical Testing (AAT)

83 September 1, 2007

84 December 1, 2007

Congratulations Newly Accredited Laboratories

AIHA would like to congratulate the following labs who achieved initial accreditation in the noted programs. See the AIHA Accredited Lab lists on the AIHA website at <http://www.aiha.org/Content/LQAP/accred/AccreditedLabs.htm> for scope of the accreditation.

- Environmental Microbiology Laboratory, Inc. (San Bruno, Calif.) (IHLAP)
- Qualtest, Inc. (Irvine, Calif.) (EMLAP)
- Shaw Environmental, Inc. — Technology Development Laboratory (Knoxville, Tenn.) (EMLAP)
- Wampanoag Environmental Lab (Aquinnah, Mass.) (ELLAP)
- Environmental Microbiology Lab, Inc. (Sacramento, Calif.) (EMLAP)
- SafeBridge Consultants, Inc. (Mountain View, Calif.) (IHLAP)