

NVLAP[®] NEWS

NATIONAL VOLUNTARY LABORATORY
ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

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NVLAP Signs IAAC MLA

NVLAP has been accepted as a signatory to the Inter American Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC) Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA). At a signing ceremony held on September 4, 2009, at the IAAC 14th General Assembly in San Jose, Costa Rica, NVLAP was recognized as an MLA member with a scope in testing and calibration laboratories. The IAAC is an association of accreditation bod-

ies and other organizations interested in conformity assessment in the Americas.

Accreditation bodies that are signatories to the IAAC MLA agree to recognize the accreditations issued by each other. Such a sys-



Sally Bruce, Chief of NVLAP, signs the MLA with IAAC. Looking on are Beatriz Garcia of OAA, Argentina, Chair of IAAC and Mauricio Soares of CGRCE/INMETRO, Brazil, Chair of MLA Committee

tem of mutual recognition of accreditations is based upon the proper operation of the accreditation systems of the bodies that join the arrangement. By reducing the need for multiple assessments, the MLA facilitates international trade and encourages regional and worldwide acceptance of test and calibration results issued by its signatory accreditation bodies.

Representing NVLAP at the 2009 IAAC meetings were Sally Bruce, Chief of NVLAP; Barbara Belzer, NVLAP Calibration Laboratories Program Manager; and Ileana Martinez, Global Standards and Information Group, NIST, who also serves as an International Affairs Specialist for NVLAP.

Inside this issue:

NVLAP Signs IAAC MLA	1
Convoy to N.Y. City	2
NVLAP Hosts Training	3
NVLAP Fees for FY 2010	4
Wildlife at NIST	4
NVLAP at ASTM Beard Conference	4
New/Revised NVLAP Documents	5
Remember the Lab Code	5
What We Do	6

Convoy Returns WTC Steel to N.Y. City



From NIST *Connections on the Web*: On September 29, after seven years on the NIST campus, more than 200 pieces of structural steel from World Trade Center Towers 1 and 2 were returned to the Port Authority of New York. The steel was collected by the Building and Fire Research Laboratory (BFRL) and the Material Science and Engineering Laboratory (MSEL) researchers as part of their multi-

year comprehensive investigation into the probable cause of the building collapses following the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.



Photos by Brian Renegar of NIST

A convoy of 25 tractor trailers, each carrying between 10,000 and 30,000 lbs. (about 4,500 to 13,600 kg) of steel, traveled with a police escort along major highways, attracting attention from motorists and television traffic helicopters. Many of the trucks were decorated with American flags and 9/11 posters honoring the firefighters, police officers, and others who lost their lives on that day.

According to Shyam Sunder, director of BRFL and principal investigator for the WTC studies, NIST has retained all of the steel samples that were examined by NIST as part of the investigation in case there is ever a need for retesting. All of the steel pieces returned today were catalogued as part of the investigation. A few pieces were also retained with permission from the Port Authority for possible future display at NIST.

NVLAP Hosts Assessor Training



Photo courtesy of Alejandra Figueroa

NVLAP hosted a day-and-a-half training event for nearly 100 of its assessors September 15 and 16, 2009, in Gaithersburg MD. NVLAP staff presented materials in a seminar format that covered such topics as: Referencing NVLAP Accreditation, International Arrangements, Internal Audits and Management Reviews, Assessment Techniques, Measurement Uncertainty, Measurement Traceability, Nonconformities, Communications, and Assessor Qualifications and Training. In addition, NVLAP covered topics from the international accreditation community, including the Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC) and the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) policy and guidance documents. The training event included breakout sessions for specific Laboratory Accreditation Programs within NVLAP.

The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. NVLAP will be planning additional training and information exchange events over the next year. The training materials used and presented at the recent training, as well as from previous training seminars, are available on the NVLAP website <<http://ts.nist.gov/Standards/Accreditation/training.cfm>>.

Assessors and technical experts provide a vital role with NVLAP as they visit the laboratories seeking or continuing accreditation. The effectiveness and credibility of NVLAP depends on the competence, professionalism, and integrity of its assessors and technical experts. NVLAP complies with the personnel requirements of ISO/IEC 17011 by having an effective system for ensuring the competence of its assessors and technical experts through procedures for selecting, training, and monitoring their performance. Training events like this are essential for carrying out that process.

NVLAP Fees for FY 2010

NVLAP fees for Fiscal year 2010 (October 1, 2009—September 30, 2010) became effective on October 1, 2009. In this time of negative economic impact to business, NVLAP is pleased to announce that it has managed to keep the costs of the Administrative/Technical Support Fee and Initial Application Fee at the same level as last year.

In addition, NVLAP is offering an extended payment plan available to laboratories with an accreditation renewal date of July 2009 or later. Laboratories have the opportunity to pay NVLAP fees over a 6-month period. The NSIT Accounts Receivables Office provides this service at your request through a repayment plan agreement. To take advantage of this payment option, first send in your purchase order to NVLAP. Second, contact Ms. Julie Weiblinger, by phone at (301) 975-2173, or by e-mail at <julie.weiblinger@nist.gov> to set up a payment plan. You must have a signed payment plan agreement in place with NIST before payments can be made.



Photo by Brian Renegar of NIST

Wildlife at NIST

Many species of birds can be seen on the NIST campus in addition to the resident Canada Geese population. Spotting and identifying birds can make for enjoyable outdoor recreation. Tracking resident numbers and seasonal migrations help NIST staff assess the health of ponds, wetlands, meadows, and woodlands on the 234 hectare/578-acre campus.

The Wildlife Management program at NIST works cooperatively with State agencies, private wildlife interest agencies, and academia on a variety of wildlife research and ecological improvement activities to improve the ecological balance of the NIST site.

The photo at left is of a Blue Heron in one of the NIST ponds. If you look closely, at the bottom right corner you will see a turtle's head extending from its shell.

NVLAP at ASTM Beard Asbestos Conference

NVLAP Program Manager Hazel M. Richmond, will participate in a panel discussion on NVLAP and laboratory topics at the *Michael E. Beard Asbestos Conference 2010: Laboratory issues*, sponsored by ASTM Committee D22 on Air Quality, which will be held January 28-29, 2010, at the Grand Hyatt San Antonio in San Antonio, Texas. For program information, go to the ASTM web site <<http://www.astm.org/COMMIT/COMMITTEE/D22.htm>>, under "Additional Information."

The conference is dedicated to the memory of Michael E. Beard (1940-2008) who served for many years as the Chair of (ASTM International) Subcommittee D22.07 on Sampling and Analysis of Asbestos. The conference commemorates one of Mike's most important contributions—the long-term stewarding of the ASTM International Johnson Conferences on asbestos.

NVLAP Documents – New/Revised (July-September 2009)

The following publications and forms have been issued since the last newsletter, and may be downloaded from the NVLAP web site. For revised publications and forms, the edition listed supersedes and replaces the previous edition. In accordance with NVLAP's document control policy, NVLAP-accredited laboratories and NVLAP assessors must ensure that all obsolete documents are removed from points of use.

If you have questions about these updates, please contact the NVLAP Program Manager assigned to the specific LAP (see Staff Directory at <<http://ts.nist.gov/Standards/Accreditation/staff.cfm>>), or Vanda White, NVLAP Quality Manager, at <vanda.white@nist.gov>.

Biometrics Testing LAP

NIST Handbook 150-25:2009, *NVLAP Biometrics Testing* (July 2009)

Lab Bulletin LB-43-2009: *Release of NIST Handbook 150-25, 2009 Edition* (2009-09-17)

Biometrics Testing Application Form (2009-09-17)

Personal Body Armor LAP

Personal Body Armor Application Form (rev. 2009-08-24)

Assessor Training Forms

NVLAP Assessor Training Checklist (generic) (rev. 2009-09-09)

On-Site Assessment Forms

NVLAP Assessor Quote Form (2009-09-03)

Instructions for Preparing an Invoice for Laboratory Assessment & Related Services (rev. 2009-08-11)

Please Remember the Lab Code!



The NVLAP Lab Code is a unique numeric identifier assigned by NVLAP to each laboratory, and is used for identification and record-keeping purposes. The correct format is 7 digits (i.e., 123456-0). Please remember to include the NVLAP Lab Code number on all correspondence that your laboratory sends to NVLAP, whether by e-mail, fax, or in hard copy.

If an e-mail message has a file attachment, please include the first six digits of the code on the front end of the file name; for example, "123456abcxyz.doc or 654321zyxcba.doc." The NVLAP Lab Code is the best way to ensure that correspondence is credited to the appropriate laboratory record.



WHAT WE DO

The National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP) provides third-party accreditation to testing and calibration laboratories. NVLAP's accreditation programs are established in response to Congressional mandates or administrative actions by the Federal Government or to requests from private-sector organizations and government agencies. NVLAP operates an accreditation system that is compliant with ISO/IEC 17011, which requires that the competence of applicant laboratories be assessed by the accreditation body against all of the requirements of ISO/IEC 17025.

NVLAP Mission Statement

To deliver high quality, value-driven accreditation services to testing and calibration laboratories by:

- ◆ meeting or exceeding customer expectations;
- ◆ operating to globally accepted requirements for accreditation bodies;
- ◆ promoting world-wide acceptance of test and calibration results of NVLAP-accredited laboratories; and
- ◆ pursuing organizational and technical excellence.

NVLAP Vision Statement

To be a world-class accreditation body recognized nationally and internationally for raising the bar and setting the standard for excellence



Photo taken by Brian Renegar of NIST

Flag-Draped Administration Building

NVLAP is located on the campus of the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Gaithersburg, MD

NVLAP News is published by the National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program, Standards Services Division, Technology Services, National Institute of Standards and Technology, U.S. Department of Commerce. Comments are welcome. **Hazel M. Richmond**, Editor, NIST/**NVLAP**, 100 Bureau Drive, Stop 2140, Gaithersburg, MD 20899-2140. Phone: (301) 975-4016; Fax: (301) 926-2884; E-mail: nvlap@nist.gov. The URL address for the **NVLAP** Home Page is <http://www.nist.gov/nvlap>.