



NATIONAL VOLUNTARY LABORATORY
ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

www.nist.gov/nvlap

Celebrate International Accreditation Day

June 9, 2008, has been designated as the first International Accreditation Day by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC). Accreditation – as independent and authoritative attestation of the competence, impartiality and integrity of conformity assessment bodies (CABs) and in turn the value and credibility of the corresponding attestations of conformity – underpins trust in the global market.

The value of accreditation has been widely recognized and adopted by economies and societies worldwide. Trust, the theme for this year's International Accreditation Day, has been chosen to highlight the way in which accreditation rules and procedures are harmonized at a worldwide level to underpin free global trade of products and services conforming to customer's requirements and to legal requirements regarding health and safety and protection of public interests in general.

Accreditation touches, in some way, every level of our lives. When something is supplied, whether it is drinking water or complex IT systems, trust is placed in the supplier. The competence of the supplier can be evaluated through the use of third-party assessment. But it is through accreditation of third-party evaluators that society can have confidence that when something is measured, calibrated, inspected, tested or certified the job has been done competently. The ability to distinguish between a proven, competent evaluator ensures that the selection of a laboratory or certification body is an informed and trusted choice and not a gamble.

In competitive and open markets, both government and business rely on trust to ensure a fair exchange of safe goods and services. The essential aspect of accreditation is that it underpins this confidence because it is a valid means of verifying claims about quality, performance, and reliability. With the globalization not only of trade, but of many other issues such as climate change and environmental protection, security and health, trust must be achieved on a global scale. The use of internationally-recognised standards as the reference criteria for accreditation and the development of the ILAC and IAF Multilateral agreements are therefore key to building trust across borders and promoting best practices in conformity assessment worldwide.

Accreditation:
Delivering Trust in the
Global Market

International
Accreditation Day
9 June 2008



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Metrology's Impact on Business

NCSL
INTERNATIONAL
2008
WORKSHOP & SYMPOSIUM
August 3-7
Orlando, FL



NVLAP at NCSLI in Orlando

NVLAP staff will attend the National Conference of Standards Laboratories International (NCSLI) Workshop and Symposium to be held August 3-7, 2008, in Orlando, Florida. Please stop by the NVLAP booth (300-302) to say hello.

The theme of the conference this year is *Metrology's Impact on Business*. Why should your business have an interest in metrology? If the goal of your business is to make a quality product or service, and ultimately a profit, then metrology has a direct impact on your business.

Metrology is the science of measurement, and measurements are critical to industry. The quality of measurements made during design and manufacturing will directly affect the quality of a product, and poor measurements may even mean scrapping products entirely. Conversely, precision measurements and state-of-the-art capabilities may lead to patents and superior products, giving one company an edge over its competition. From research and development to shipping and receiving, measurements matter to business.

Welcome Alejandra Figueroa

Ms. Alejandra (Alex) Figueroa joined the NVLAP staff as a Management and Program Assistant in February 2008, and provides support to NVLAP program managers with the management of their assigned programs. Her responsibilities include maintenance of accreditation data in the NVLAP Information System (NIS), assistance with accounting, budgetary and financial functions, processing of laboratory applications and fees, and serving as liaison between NVLAP and its customers for non-technical issues.

Alex graduated from the University of Maryland, College Park, in 2002 with a B.A. in Art History and Archaeology. Prior to joining NVLAP, Alex worked at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., with the photographic archives.

NVLAP Hosts NSCLI Meeting at NIST

Tom Hettenhouser, NVLAP Calibration Laboratories Program Manager and NCSLI Virginia Section Coordinator, held a joint section meeting for Maryland and Virginia at NIST. There were 52 attendees!

Presentations included NCSLI's *Education Outreach Program* by Elizabeth Gentry of the NIST Office of Weights & Measures, *Spectrum Analyzer Calibration* by Peter Dack of Fluke, *Uncertainty Analysis* by Tom Hettenhouser of NVLAP, and *Risk Analysis* by Michelle Foncannon, also from the NIST Office of Weights & Measures. Those in attendance were given the opportunity to tour a NIST laboratory of their choice. The attendees selected laboratories for temperature, force, flow, radiometry, and dimensional.



The event was very well received and the attendees provided very positive feedback. Tom intends to alternate the Virginia section meetings between NIST in the Spring and the Norfolk area in the Fall. This type of meeting supports NVLAP's quality objective of communicating frequently with customers and stakeholders to determine their accreditation needs and requirements.

LAP Updates

Potential New LAP for Homeland Security Applications

NVLAP, through NIST and the U.S. Department of Commerce, recently published a Federal Register Notice and Request for Comments on the Proposed Establishment of a Laboratory Accreditation Program for Laboratories Performing Interoperability, Performance and Conformance Biometrics Tests. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security requested that NVLAP establish this program for laboratories performing these tests on Personal Identification Verification equipment used in Homeland Security Applications. Biometric technologies such as facial, fingerprint, retinal, and voice recognitions are used to verify the identity of individuals attempting to gain access to secure areas. NVLAP is currently organizing a public workshop on this topic and will announce that event in an upcoming Federal Register notice.

Energy Efficient Lighting Products

NIST Handbook 150-1, NVLAP Energy Efficient Lighting Products has been recently updated and published in March 2008. It is available on the NVLAP website <www.nist.gov/nvlap>.

Electromagnetic Compatibility and Telecommunications

NIST Handbook 150-11, NVLAP Electromagnetic Compatibility and Telecommunications has been recently updated and published and is available on the NVLAP website <www.nist.gov/nvlap>.

Look for additional updated handbooks on the NVLAP web site in the near future for Voting Systems Testing and ITST.



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 from requests by private-sector organizations. NVLAP is in full conformance with the standards of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), including ISO/IEC 17025 and ISO/IEC 17011.

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.



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

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