



American Association for Laboratory Accreditation

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

A2LA adds new Veterinary Accreditation Program requirements.

FREDERICK, Md., December 4, 2008 – The American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA) is proud to announce the re-introduction of the Veterinary Accreditation Program to its broad range of accreditation activities. This program has been completely revised, and applications for accreditation are now being accepted. Roxanne M. Robinson, A2LA Vice President and COO says, "This veterinary accreditation program demonstrates A2LA's ability to meet the needs of the veterinary community with a robust accreditation program developed in cooperation with leading, international veterinary authorities."

Veterinary laboratories world-wide may choose to meet the ISO/IEC 17025:2005, *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories* as a stand-alone requirement for accreditation or the combined criteria of ISO/IEC 17025:2005 and the *OIE Quality Standard and Guidelines for Veterinary Laboratories: Infectious Diseases, 2008*. These OIE requirements are introduced in A2LA R216 – *Specific Requirements: Veterinary Accreditation Program* now available at www.A2LA.org. This document includes instructions on how to obtain a copy of the OIE Standard aforementioned. Upon evidence of original OIE and ISO/IEC 17025:2005 Standard ownership, A2LA promptly will send the combined criteria checklist to the applicant facility.

These OIE requirements supplement ISO/IEC 17025:2005 to evaluate diagnostic and clinical veterinary laboratories that conduct commercial, government, academic, and international veterinary testing in the following areas: infectious disease diagnostics, disease surveillance, virology, pathology, microbiology,

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immunology, screening for growth promoters and drug/chemical residue that includes antibiotics, antihelmethetics, pesticides, metals, organics, DNA/RNA, and GMO.

Dr. Peter Wright, an Expert Participant on the OIE Biological Standards Commission since 1991, says, “We are hearing more and more credit being given to quality management systems like ISO 17025, and veterinary laboratories around the world are picking up on that. Both the quality management system and method validation principles must be present together.” A2LA is pleased that our new Veterinary Accreditation Program builds upon the ISO/IEC 17025:2005 method validation requirements with the additional OIE specific requirements applicable to leading veterinary institutions.

The OIE is the World Organization for Animal Health created in 1924 as the Office International des Epizooties and still known by the initials of the original organization’s name. It is an intergovernmental organisation with a mandate from its 172 Member Countries and Territories to improve world animal health worldwide. In its capacity as the global reference organisation for animal health and zoonoses, the OIE elaborates standards that ensure the safety of world trade in animals and animal products within the framework of the WTO SPS Agreement. The OIE also provides standards for animal disease surveillance, prevention and control methods, including laboratory diagnostic and vaccine quality. The OIE works closely with other international organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the World Bank.

A2LA is a nonprofit, non-governmental, public service, membership society based in Frederick, Maryland, United States of America celebrating its 30th year in 2008. Its mission is to provide comprehensive, third-party accreditation services for testing and calibration laboratories, inspection bodies, proficiency testing providers, reference material producers, and product certification bodies. Services are available to applicants whether they are private, federal, state, or academic and regardless of their size. A2LA is the largest, multi-discipline accreditation body in the United States. A2LA is internationally recognized. A2LA welcomes applications for the accreditation of many types of conformity assessment bodies. The addition of the Veterinary Accreditation Program will provide veterinary laboratories with a global recognition for the excellent service provided to their customers.

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