



American Association for Laboratory Accreditation



Excellence in Accreditation, Commitment to Service



A2LA Mission

- Provide world-class accreditation and training services for testing and calibration laboratories, inspection bodies, proficiency testing providers, reference material producers and product certifiers. These and other future services should create stakeholder confidence in the quality, competence and integrity of all A2LA-accredited organizations and in their products and services.





Carrying out the mission:

- A2LA organizational structure
- Achieving and maintaining recognition
- Active participation in international and industry groups
- Accreditation criteria
- Assessment approach
- Continuous improvement





A2LA Organizational Structure

- Board of Directors
- Criteria Council
- Technical Advisory Committees
- Accreditation Council
- Over 170 Assessors
- Full time staff at headquarters



International recognition

- ILAC, APLAC, IAAC - International structure used to recognize accreditation bodies
- System to evaluate accreditation bodies to ISO/IEC 17011
- APLAC is very active in RMP Accreditation
- Nine Accreditation Bodies recognized by APLAC for RMP
- IAAC recently established criteria for RMP recognition



International and industry involvement

- Leadership roles on ILAC, APLAC and IAAC to help establish policy
- Active participation at ISO
 - TC69 -Statisticians active on working group for statistical methods for uncertainty
 - Assessor/Statistician working on the REMCO working group for ISO Guide 35
- ASTM



Accreditation criteria

- ISO Guide 34
 - ISO Guides 30, 31 and 35
 - ISO/IEC 17025 *Compliance*

- ILAC/APLAC Requirements
 - Reference to Accreditation
 - Traceability Policy
 - Proficiency Testing
 - APLAC TC 008





ISO Guide 34

- This standard covers both management system requirements as well as technical requirements
- Goes beyond ISO 9001 because it includes technical requirements to determine **technical** competency



ISO Guide 34 Technical Requirements

- Personnel
- Production planning
- Production control
- Accommodation and environmental conditions
- Material handling and storage
- Material processing
- Measurement methods
- Measurement equipment



Statistical approaches



ISO Guide 34 Technical Requirements Continued

- Data evaluation
- Metrological traceability
- Assessment of homogeneity
- Assessment of stability
- Characterization
- Assignment of property values and their uncertainties
- Certificates of documentation for users
- Distribution service



Metals and ISO Guide 34

- Homogeneity – This needs to be checked very carefully due to normal variability in production (suppliers)
- Stability – RMs maybe stable indefinitely (when stored properly) which is not clearly anticipated in the current ISO Guide 34 (zero uncertainty for long term stability). This may be addressed in the new ISO Guide 35.





ISO Guide 31 Reference Materials- Contents of Certificates and Labels

- Information reported – major area of concern
- International feedback
- Routine laboratory inquiries
- Assessment findings



Draft ISO Guide 31

- Reference material certificate
- Product information sheet
- Table I identifies what are mandatory requirements for the contents of these document types for each criteria



What is Accreditation?

- Evaluation of an organization to determine **technical** competence
- Technical experts - assessor(s) performs on-site assessment evaluating management system and technical requirements
- Interview staff and observe testing, production processes and the statistical approaches of the reference material producer
- Reviews procedures and records
- Reports on findings prior to departing the site.





Assessment Approach for RMP

- Assessment team is composed of at least one technical expert familiar with the type of production and testing and a statistician.
- All A2LA assessors are also approved Lead Assessors capable of assessing the quality management system. Typically the statistician serves as the Lead Assessor.
- Statistical expertise is necessary to appropriately assess RMP activities related to characterization, homogeneity, stability, uncertainty, etc.





Continuous improvement

- Refining our criteria and approaches
- Listening and monitoring activities at the international level and with industry
- Training assessors and staff as requirements are updated
- Providing education



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