

	DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE National Institute of Standards and Technology National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program	ISSUE DATE: August 2, 2023
	LAB BULLETIN	NUMBER: LB-151-2023
		LAP: ECT
SUBJECT: Change in process to request expansion to ECT Scope of Accreditation		

Purpose

The purpose of this bulletin is to notify accredited laboratories in the Electromagnetic Compatibility & Telecommunications (ECT) laboratory accreditation program (LAP) of a change in the process to request an expansion to their scope of accreditation.

Overview

The ECT LAP has a large quantity of methods. For instance, when international methods are published, regional and national versions, based on the international version, are subsequently published. Laboratory customers often require accredited testing to the international version, as well as similar regional and national versions, which require an accredited laboratory to include these regional and national versions on their scope. Since NVLAP also includes the issue dates of all these methods, multiple versions of a test may appear on a laboratory's scope.

In addition, records of verifications are required to be provided with any request, even when method versions are similar. ISO/IEC 17025:2017, 7.2.1.5 requires that, *“The laboratory shall verify that it can properly perform methods before introducing them by ensuring that it can achieve the required performance. Records of the verification shall be retained. If the method is revised by the issuing body, verification shall be repeated to the extent necessary.”*

When new methods or version updates are not available under the Scope of Accreditation page in the Lab Portal, the laboratory's request alerts NVLAP staff to add new and updated methods to the Available Test Method list.

Background

Until now, laboratories would request scope changes in a variety of ways (e.g., via email to the program manager, typing into text fields or uploading documents in different places in the NVLAP Interactive Web System (NIWS) Lab portal, completing the previous version of the ECT scope expansion request form). To assist laboratories with providing scope expansion requests for review, NVLAP has updated the ECT Scope Expansion Request form to ensure that a consistent process is in place. This new form will direct an accredited laboratory to initiate their request in the NIWS Lab portal which will help streamline the review of the request and allow the laboratory to present the request at any stage in their accreditation cycle. The instructions will also ensure that laboratories provide the information necessary to review the request including required verification records.

New process

Effective immediately, the laboratory must use the NIWS Lab portal and the updated ECT Scope Expansion Request form for any requested additions or version updates to a scope of accreditation.

Please note that not using this new process may delay NVLAP's review of requested scope expansions.

The updated ECT Scope Expansion Request form has been attached and is also available in the Lab portal under the Lab Documents link for the Scope Documents category.

The instructions on the form direct a laboratory how and where to perform actions in the NIWS Lab portal, including where required information must be uploaded for a laboratory's request to be reviewed.

If the lab requires the scope expansion earlier than the next onsite assessment, the completed request form and supporting documents must be uploaded for review by NVLAP staff and the assessor who most recently assessed the lab.

Please retain this NVLAP lab bulletin for future reference.

Questions concerning NVLAP accreditation and the ECT scope expansion process should be directed to ECT program managers Amanda McDonald, amanda.mcdonald@nist.gov and Janneth Marcelo, janneth.marcelo@nist.gov.