



SECRETARIAT
HPS Laboratory Accreditation Program for
Instrument Calibration Laboratories and Source Manufacturers

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Dear Sir or Madam:

The Health Physics Society has conducted a laboratory accreditation program (LAP) for instrument calibration laboratories since 1988. The program has been periodically updated to incorporate the latest guidance in accrediting calibration laboratories. For example, in 1992, the program was revised to meet requirements in ISO/IEC Guide 25 and in 2004, the program was revised to meet requirements in ISO/IEC 17025. This summer, the HPS Board of Directors approved this latest revision of the program for instrument calibration laboratories and for organizations that manufacturer or supply radiation calibration sources. This is your invitation to participate in the HPS LAP.

Why should your organization seek accreditation? Accreditation by an independent agency adds credibility to any business. Government agencies have found accreditation so important as to codify the requirement for accreditation for dosimetry (U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and Department of Energy) and radiobioassay (U.S. Department of Energy) programs. The medical community (sponsored by the American Association of Physicists in Medicine, AAPM) has also established an accreditation program for companies providing calibrations for medical dosimetry instruments. A major benefit reported by some accredited laboratories is that accreditation reduces the number and scope of external audits.

Why seek accreditation under the auspices of the Health Physics Society? First, no other accrediting body offers an accreditation program for source manufacturers that encompasses both quality and technical issues. Second the membership of the HPSLAP and the HPS technical assessors are volunteers from the industry, academia, national laboratories, and government agencies. Using volunteers to administer the program and conduct the assessments means that the HPS LAP is cost-effective compared with other accreditation programs. Third, participants in the program can have input on the direction of the program by serving as members of the Laboratory Accreditation Policy Committee or the Laboratory Accreditation Assessment Committee, or by attending the committee meetings as observers. (Requests from HPS members resulted in the expansion of the program into source manufacturer accreditation and low dose-rate calibration accreditation, areas not offered in other programs.)

The Program has begun the process to gain recognition by the National Cooperation for Laboratory Accreditation (NACLA). When complete (estimated to take about 1-1/2 years), the HPS LAP will be recognized at the same level as other national accreditation programs such as American

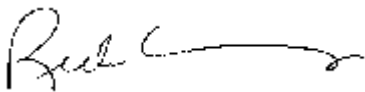
Association of Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA) and the National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP). In fact, laboratories accredited under the HPS LAP will be able to gain accreditation under other NACLA-recognized accreditation programs with very little additional effort.

How does the accreditation process work? The first step is to apply. Applications and the other information you need for accreditation are found on the HPS web site (<http://hps.org/aboutthesociety/labaccreditation.html>) or from Nancy Johnson (HPS 1313 Dolley Madison Blvd., Suite 402, McLean, VA 22101 - or 703-790-1745 - or Njohnson@BurkInc.com). The second step is to arrange for a performance test that applies to the scope of your accreditation. The third step is the site assessment by the HPS Laboratory Accreditation Assessment Committee. Finally, you will correct any items requiring resolution that were identified during the assessment.

What does it cost to become accredited? The costs include an application fee of \$1200 (payable every three years); an annual administrative fee of \$1000; the costs of the performance test through NIST or a secondary laboratory (conducted before initial accreditation and once every three years afterwards) will vary based on the number and type of tests; and the assessment cost of approximately \$6000 (travel expenses only for three assessors, every three years).

If you would like to receive regular updates on the status of the accreditation program or need further information, please contact me at 208-526-2765 (cummfm@inel.gov).

Sincerely,



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