A TESTING LABORATORY'S INTRODUCTION TO INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION SERVICE, INC.

Why Accreditation?

Manufacturers, product certifiers and regulators rely on the integrity, reliability and technical competence of testing laboratories for evidence that products are safe and meet the requirements of codes and standards. Regulators and the marketplace in general, increasingly insist that test reports be from accredited testing laboratories. A laboratory's product—its test report—must be dependable and carry the mark of an accreditation organization that is independent and that has the safety of the public as its guiding purpose. Impartiality and concern for public safety are qualities to look for in an organization that accredits laboratories, and these are the qualities embodied in International Accreditation Service (IAS).

IAS provides credibility that goes beyond that of most accreditation organizations because IAS is interested only in quality and technical competence. IAS isn't the largest accreditation body, just one of the most experienced and respected. IAS's international reputation has been built on its high level of technical ability and its commitment to public safety.

The IAS laboratory accreditation program is modeled on the international standard ISO/IEC Standard 17025, *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories* and is recognized globally by the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation and the Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation.

Benefits of IAS Accreditation

•   IAS accreditation helps testing laboratories meet their clients' demands for evidence of technical competence. IAS provides you assurance, through accreditation, that testing laboratories have been evaluated against internationally accepted standards. Importantly, also, the IAS accreditation process is independent, transparent and dependable.

•   IAS is committed to operating a cost-effective laboratory accreditation program that ensures the services of accredited laboratories are consistent and of high quality.

•   IAS accreditation provides proof of compliance with ISO/IEC Standard 17025.

•   IAS accreditation is independent and objective, and is based on a transparent accreditation process incorporating open public hearings for development of accreditation criteria for testing laboratories.

•   IAS accreditation provides evidence that laboratories render competent and consistent services in line with international standards.

- IAS places tremendous importance on the training of its assessors. This leads to a high level of assessor competency and technical expertise.

- With its knowledge base and teams of technical experts, IAS helps to improve the quality of work performed by its accredited testing and calibration laboratories.

- IAS facilitates proficiency testing and interlaboratory comparisons that laboratories use to demonstrate their technical competence. IAS provides independent feedback concerning a laboratory's actual performance and is used as a tool to make improvements.

The Accreditation Process

IAS accredits testing laboratories by verifying technical competence and assessing their management systems to the international standard ISO/IEC Standard 17025. The process for becoming an IAS-accredited testing laboratory begins with the testing laboratory's submittal of an application, applicable fees, and management system documentation. An IAS accreditation officer is selected to partner with the laboratory throughout the accreditation process, beginning with a review of the management system and the requested scope of accreditation. Once the management system has been reviewed and approved, IAS selects an assessment team based on the requested scope of accreditation. The assessment team conducts an on-site assessment of the laboratory and develops an assessment report. Once a laboratory has satisfied IAS accreditation requirements, compliance with ISO/IEC Standard 17025 and demonstrated technical competence, an accreditation certificate is issued.

About IAS

International Accreditation Service, a subsidiary corporation of the International Code Council, assesses and accredits testing and calibration laboratories. The IAS testing laboratory accreditation program is recognized internationally by the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the Asia Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (APAC)). In operation since 1975, IAS is a nonprofit, public-benefit corporation and one of the oldest accreditation bodies of its type.

For More Information

To learn more about IAS testing laboratory accreditation, please visit www.iasonline.org, call toll-free 1-866-427-4422, or e-mail info@iasonline.org.