



Harnessing the Challenges in Reinventing California's Laboratory Accreditation Program - Commercial Laboratory Perspective

Commercial Labs Account for a Large Fraction of Analytical Work in CA



Laboratories Currently Receiving ELAP Accreditation Services

Type of Laboratory	Number of Labs
In-State	618
Out of State (essentially all commercial)	101
Commercial	310
Municipal	315
Other (industrial, Federal, state)	94

Note that the ELAP database actually lists nearly 50 “lab categories”, demonstrating some of the current problems with the “system”

Commercial Labs Are not All Created Equal



- **There are commercial labs (Babcock, Eurofins, TestAmerica, Weck, etc) with very large scopes of accreditation.**

- **There are also commercial labs that are “micro” only.**

What Do All These Labs Have in Common?



- **Desire for a level playing field when it comes to accreditation.**
 - **Amongst each other**
 - **Compared to municipal labs**

- **Desire for a standard that is auditable and comprehensive.**

- **Have fees reflect the actual service performed.**

What ELSE Do All These Labs Have in Common?



- **Have ELAP be a resource for technical questions to resolve interpretation questions.**
- **Ensure that ELAP stays current with approved analytical methods.**
- **Have ELAP be a resource for other state agencies, as part of leveling the playing field.**

How Can California's Reinvigorated Program Meet These Desires



- **Implement a new standard as soon as possible.**
 - **Selecting a standard that meets everyone's needs is like herding cats.....**
- **Ensure that auditors are well trained.**
 - **Big step forward with the funding to allow an external contract for training**
- **Implement a fee schedule that is sustainable.**
 - **ELTAC is just starting to evaluate this... and it will be controversial.**

How Can CA's Program Meet These Needs



- **Have ELAP be a resource for technical questions to resolve interpretation questions.**
 - **This will take time. CA is still very low on the learning curve as far as technical strength. Fixing the overall broken system comes first.**

- **Ensure that ELAP stays current with approved analytical methods.**
 - **ELTAC has weighed in on this and ELAP is embracing the advice.**

How Can CA's Program Meet These Needs



- **Have ELAP be a resource for other state agencies, as part of leveling the playing field.**
 - **This goes with ELAP as a technical resource. It will take time to build expertise.**
 - **In the meantime, it's a role that ELTAC can help play (once we finish dealing with the 'big' issues.....)**

Conclusions



- **ELAP is moving in the right direction, but it is not a rapid process, and sometimes bureaucracy makes it even slower.**
- **Getting a new standard in place sooner rather than later will benefit commercial labs overall.**
- **Having a realistic fee schedule will also make a big difference to commercial labs.**

Any Questions?



Andy Eaton, PhD, BCES
andyeaton@eurofinsus.com
626.386.1125

Eurofins Eaton Analytical, Inc.
www.eurofinsus.com/eaton

