

A118 – Laboratory Proficiency Testing Plan  
Revision 1.3 – June 2011

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# LABORATORY PROFICIENCY TESTING PLAN

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

CALA became a signatory to the APLAC mutual recognition agreement in November 2005. One of the conditions of acceptance into this group was a modification of our proficiency testing requirements of accreditation. In short, we had to implement a program whereby CALA ensures that there is adequate PT coverage for all accredited tests.

## 2.0 IMPLEMENTATION

CALA's proficiency testing requirements for accredited laboratories is found in P02-03 - *CALA Program Description - Proficiency Testing Policy for Accreditation*. It details a hierarchy of PT options. In order to facilitate a laboratory's compliance with this policy, laboratories are required to maintain a Proficiency Testing Plan with CALA. This plan is reviewed and approved by CALA staff.

## 3.0 COMPLETING THE PLAN

Your laboratory was emailed a CSV file that can be loaded into an EXCEL spreadsheet. This spreadsheet (your PT Plan) contains the current and proposed scope of accreditation for your laboratory.

Column Name	Description
Membership_number *	The CALA membership number.
Appendix number *	This field contains the CALA assigned appendix number.
Appendix_Name *	The generic appendix name (e.g., DISSOLVED METALS_WATER).
Method_ID *	The lab specific method ID.
Parameter *	The specific analyte.
PT_Code *	The CALA PT code that is assigned to each analyte. A code starting with "PT" has CALA PT associated with it.
Option †	In this field, enter the PT option to be used (e.g., ii, iv, v or vi). This field is populated if CALA PT is already used.
PT_Provider †	In this field, indicate the approved PT provider that will be providing the samples.
Percent *	The percent of analytes in an appendix currently covered by PT.
Option_ii_PT_Status*	The current PT and accreditation status.

Column Name	Description
Option_ii_Last_Processed_Date*	The date on which CALA last uploaded reported information to the database and updated status.
Comment†	Provide a brief justification if any correlation proviso option other than b) ii) was selected.

\* DO NOT modify this field

† fields that may be modified by laboratory

Using P02-03 and the list of approved PT providers (P02-05) for guidance, make any necessary changes to the plan. When determining the option to be used, laboratories must investigate the availability of PT from options i) through vi) and select the first one that is available. For example, if PT for an analyte is not available through CALA but is available through an approved PT provider, the latter must be used; a less formal inter-laboratory study will not be considered acceptable for the purpose of accreditation.

Where the Option is neither i) nor ii), enter an explanation in the comments field.

Submit the completed plan to Ken Middlebrook at [kmiddlebrook@cala.ca](mailto:kmiddlebrook@cala.ca)

## 4.0 MONITORING FOR COMPLIANCE

CALA will monitor ongoing compliance with the CALA PT policy through the following processes:

- Laboratories using CALA PT will continue to follow existing policies and procedures;
- Laboratories using option i from an approved provider will report results of PT to CALA twice per year. This reporting will be performed on-line and will be subject to the remedial actions that are applied to CALA PT (e.g., possible suspensions, suspensions, etc.). On a random basis, CALA may request that the complete PT report be submitted to CALA;
- Laboratories using option ii) will report outcomes of PT to CALA twice per year. This reporting will be performed on-line and will be subject to the remedial actions that are applied to CALA PT (e.g., possible suspensions, suspensions, etc.). On a random basis, CALA may request that the complete PT report be submitted to CALA; and,
- Compliance with other PT options will be monitored during site assessments. For example, a laboratory that has not participated in a PT that was scheduled to occur before the assessment will be cited as a non-conformance, whereas a laboratory that has the assessment before the scheduled participation will be deemed to be in conformance with their plan.

## 5.0 NEW APPENDICES

Prior to accreditation being granted for any new appendix, the laboratory must state what PT option is being used. The Scope of Testing Template (generally, the last page of any of the Accreditation Program application forms) has been modified accordingly. If a laboratory does not indicate the option to be used, the application will not be processed until it is clear how PT requirements will be met. Laboratories must successfully participate in appropriate PT prior to accreditation being granted.

## 6.0 QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about the correlation proviso or how to complete the proficiency testing plan, please contact Ken Middlebrook ([kmiddlebrook@cala.ca](mailto:kmiddlebrook@cala.ca)) or Colleen Cotter ([ccotter@cala.ca](mailto:ccotter@cala.ca)).