

**Subject: Message from the President of CAEAL**

**Date:** Tuesday, April 26, 2005 2:04 PM

**From:** Webmaster <webmaster@caeal.ca>

**To:** CAEAL

**Cc:** CAEAL Board, CAEAL Accreditation Council

**MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF CAEAL**

**CHRIS PHARO, Ph.D**

**April 26, 2005**

The dust is beginning to settle again after the intense activity over the last half of 2004. Because CAEAL had the Accreditation Council trained and in place, and because of the tremendous efforts by CAEAL staff, we started the New Year with 114 labs accredited. As of April 20, 2005 CAEAL has accredited 144 labs, and there are 30 more in the applicant phase. That's pretty impressive. Thank you for your endorsement of the CAEAL program.

On March 16, 2005, CAEAL was voted full membership in the Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC). This means that APLAC recognizes CAEAL as a national third-party organization engaged in the accreditation of laboratories. The next step is an evaluation by APLAC, which now is expected in July, and we should be invited to sign the APLAC Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) sometime in November. At that point CAEAL will have achieved international recognition as an accrediting body.

Recently, on April 20th, the CAEAL PT program became accredited by the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA). Of significance for CAEAL is the fact that another external organization has conducted an evaluation of CAEAL's quality system and part of its program, and provides further affirmation of its excellence.

March also saw the first round of PT for the labs in the Alberta Alternate program. At this point almost 100 labs are participating, and it is expected that during the next two years the number will grow to over 600.

Recently the Board agreed to change the definition of a "small lab" to allow labs with up to seven appendices to qualify for the small lab fee. This move lowers the cost of regular accreditation assessments, and should be an incentive to encourage more small labs to join the program. Almost half (45%) of the labs in the CAEAL accreditation stream now fall into the small lab category and save a significant amount of money.

On the direction of the Board, and through the efforts of the CAEAL staff, all questions relating to trademark and liability have been resolved and labs may now use the CAEAL accreditation symbol on their stationery. There are some guidelines for its use, but there is no charge. I encourage you to proclaim your high standards of quality assurance and control. Call, write to, or e-mail the CAEAL office.

Finally, a reminder that the Annual General Meeting is to be held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on Friday June 17th. We also intend to hold a workshop on the accreditation program on Thursday June 16th. The workshop will cover some of the issues that the new standard ISO/IEC 17011 will generate that have an impact on laboratories. For example, the period that labs have to respond to the findings of the assessment team may need to be shortened: how should we do this? There are also issues related to ISO/IEC 17025 that frequently arise that members may wish to address (e.g. method validation). The workshop will also give us an opportunity to provide you with an overview of the accreditation process. The combination of the workshop and the AGM will thus give you a golden opportunity to have input to the directions CAEAL will take into the future.

The recent changes to CAEAL's program mean that the Board is reviewing and revising the CAEAL Strategic Plan. The Board would like as much input from members as possible on such topics as the scope of CAEAL's accreditation program, and what recognitions from other countries should we pursue.

I look forward to seeing you in Halifax.

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