

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

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

**To:** CAEAL

**Cc:** CAEAL Board

Message from the President of CAEAL

Russ Calow, B.Sc., CChem

August 13 2003

I hope this finds everyone well and enjoying the Canadian summer!

I would like to bring you up-to-date with two exciting CAEAL developments. On July 25th, 2003, CAEAL and the SCC authorized a formal agreement with the Ontario Ministry of the Environment to provide ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation to all laboratories testing drinking water for the Ontario public. Accreditation of all drinking water testing laboratories was recommended by Justice O'Connor in his report from the Walkerton Inquiry and codified into law recently as part of Ontario's Safe Drinking Water Act. This ground-breaking agreement marks the first time in our knowledge that a government regulatory agency for drinking water has turned to an established accrediting body to provide accreditation services of this type. History has shown that governments have tended to strike out on their own in the face of public pressure. Ontario's move signals clearly that the CAEAL-SCC program is a global leader in the field.

I would also like to publicly thank Rick Wilson, Colleen Cotter and Ned Gravel of CAEAL and Allison Sutherland, CAEAL legal council, for their hard work and diligence in drafting and re-drafting the Ontario agreement. We all should be proud of their work and of the fact that CAEAL will be involved in ensuring the protection of Ontario's public!

On Monday August 11th, 2003 the SCC convened a meeting of all of the PALCAN laboratory program partners. This is probably the second time in the history of the PALCAN program that all of the partners met together, and certainly the first time for a discussion about the structure and functioning of the laboratory accreditation program!

Present for CAEAL were Russ Calow and Rick Wilson. The SCC was represented by Stephen Cross and Pat Paladino and representatives were present from the NRC CLAS program, BNQ and the Ontario Medical Association.

It was very interesting to note that all of the partners shared similar concerns about the PALCAN program with respect to cost, service and the lack of marketing/public and regulator education. The Partners were also given for the first time detailed financial information about PALCAN and the SCC.

The meeting was exceptionally open, positive and full of energy. Dr. Peter Clark set the tone by challenging the group to strive for positive changes in the PALCAN program that would respond to the pressures facing the Canadian lab industry. The outcome of the meeting was two major action items. CAEAL has been asked to create a position paper that would redefine the PALCAN partnership agreement and specifically look at how to best define the roles and responsibilities of the SCC, the TG Labs committee and the Partners. The SCC has been asked to provide more detailed financial information and methodology around the allocation of overhead costs to PALCAN. A second meeting has been scheduled for early October in time to take recommendations to the TG Labs meeting in November and the SCC's oversight committee (ACCA) meeting in December.

I am very pleased to say to our membership that for the first time in many years I see energy and a willingness to change on the part of the SCC. The transformation in our relationship with the SCC is very encouraging! I look forward to the next six months as I now believe that we have a chance to remake the SCC/CAEAL partnership in a positive way and more importantly to set the blue print for accreditation of all labs in Canada.

I would once again encourage you to contact Rick Wilson, or myself with any questions and concerns. Rick's and my contact details are listed below:

Russ Calow  
Director, Mineral Analytical Services  
SGS Lakefield Research  
PO Box 4300, 185 Concession Street  
Lakefield, Ontario, K0L 2H0

Phone: 705 652 2018  
FAX: 705 652 6365  
Cell Phone: 705 740 4449  
Email: [russ.calow@sgs.com](mailto:russ.calow@sgs.com)

Rick Wilson  
Executive Director  
CAEAL  
Suite 300, 265 Carling Avenue  
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 2E1

Phone: (613) 233-5300  
FAX: (613) 233-5501  
Email: [rwilson@caeal.ca](mailto:rwilson@caeal.ca)

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from all of you in the future.

Russ Calow  
President CAEAL