

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

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**MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF CAEAL**

**CHRIS PHARO, Ph.D**

**AUGUST 13, 2004**

It has been a productive month since my message to you of July 13. We have achieved some notable successes for CAEAL, and continued to make progress in our two-pronged objectives with the SCC: to accomplish a tidy and harmonious termination of the CAEAL-SCC partnership agreement, and to ensure that the tripartite agreement with Ontario Ministry of the Environment can continue to be delivered without interruption and without significant changes to the laboratories.

In late July, 2004, CAEAL was notified that it had been granted Associate Membership status with the Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC). This is the first step along the path to Full Membership with APLAC, which is a consortium of organizations in the Asia Pacific region of the world that are responsible for accrediting testing and inspection facilities: in CAEAL's case, for analytical laboratories. Members who are successfully evaluated against ISO/IEC Guide 58 become internationally recognized accreditation bodies. APLAC's objectives are to foster the development of competent laboratories and inspection bodies in member countries, to harmonize accreditation practices within the region and with other regions, and to facilitate mutual recognition of accredited test, measurement and inspection results. CAEAL anticipates full membership status sometime in 2005.

In early August Ken Middlebrook, CAEAL's PT Manager, announced that CAEAL, in association with the Alberta Research Council, was successful in its bid for Alberta Environment's PT program for its "alternate labs". The Alberta Environment Laboratory Data Quality Assurance Policy (LDQA) requires all facilities regulated by an Alberta Environment approval or Code of Practice to use an accredited lab for required parameters. The Alternate Laboratory Data Quality Assurance Program was implemented to ensure that all facilities meet the objectives of the LDQA Policy when, due to size of facility, or type and frequency of analysis, use of a fully accredited laboratory is not reasonable. The alternate lab program involves site evaluations as well as PT testing. CAEAL will be providing PT samples to approximately 500 municipal and industrial labs involved with drinking water and wastewater. The PT portion will generate revenue for CAEAL of about \$350,000 over the next three years. On behalf of the CAEAL Board I extend thanks and congratulations to Ken and his team for the effort they put into this initiative.

Rick Wilson and I met with the SCC on July 30 and again on August 11 to discuss the document or agreement to be developed to take the place of the current CAEAL – SCC partnership agreement as it relates to the delivery of the Ontario drinking water regulations. Both CCIL and TG Labs had observers present at the July 30 meeting, and only CCIL on August 11. Issues that need to be addressed as part of the termination of the current partnership were also a priority. We also met jointly with the SCC and Ontario MoE on August 12.

With respect to the Ontario drinking water regulations, and the tripartite agreement between CAEAL, the SCC and Ontario MoE, both CAEAL and the SCC have committed to fulfill their respective obligations to deliver this program. Both parties, and MoE, now recognize that most of the details defined in the CAEAL-SCC partnership agreement were adopted into the tripartite agreement, and therefore discussions are focused on the few issues that need to be included in a new arrangement between CAEAL and the SCC to ensure their obligations are met. A third draft of this document is being prepared, and the three parties will meet again on September 13 with the hope that a final document emerges.

The main issues under discussion for the termination agreement include confidentiality, ongoing liabilities, transfer of fees, and how to deal with joint lab assessments. CAEAL and SCC have agreed that both parties will retain access to primary documents, such as the Rating Guide, so that the transition to separate accreditation bodies will be as smooth and as transparent as possible to laboratories.

At the August 12 meeting Ontario MoE also alerted both CAEAL and the SCC to the implications contained in both recent regulations, such as that covering Brownfields (O. Reg. 153/04), and pending regulations, such as those likely to evolve from the recommendations of the final report of the Industrial Pollution Action Team (IPAT) relating to industrial spills and emissions. The regulations for Brownfields require accreditation of labs undertaking analytical work, and the others likely will make the same demands: the final report of the IPAT includes a recommendation that labs be accredited to ISO 17025. The Brownfields regulation requires that labs be accredited in general to ISO 17025, and be accredited for specific parameters only when those parameters are offered as part of a PT program that has been accredited, as has CAEAL's, by the SCC.

Finally, as of January 1, 2005, CAEAL will be offering accreditation to ISO Standard 17025 as an independent body. As a result, laboratories other than those in the Ontario drinking water program accredited through the current CAEAL-SCC program will have to decide, by November 30, whether they wish to continue to be accredited through the SCC (in which case their files will be transferred to the SCC), or through CAEAL; or whether they want accreditation through both bodies. For the labs that choose CAEAL as its accreditation body, CAEAL will have in place a process

that will ensure that accreditation is in place on January 1, 2005. For these labs there will be no change in the process except that the certificate of accreditation will carry the CAEAL logo, and the scope will be carried on the CAEAL website.

As all of you are aware, accreditation assessments conducted by CAEAL currently are reviewed by the staff and the Advisory Panel, and result in a recommendation from the CAEAL Board of Directors to the SCC that the laboratory should be accredited. When CAEAL assumes the responsibility of granting accreditations, the assessment reports will flow from the Advisory Panel directly to a new Accreditation Council that will take the final decision on accreditations. The Council will comprise six to ten individuals from the public sector, appointed by the Board but acting independently. This arrangement will continue the current strength of CAEAL's technical reviews and will add a strong new dimension to the final process. It will also satisfy completely the requirements of ISO 17011.

Terms of Reference have been developed for the Council, and we are now seeking nominations for members. If you know of someone who would be a good candidate, please let me or the CAEAL office know. Members of the Council will be expected to perform their duties in a manner such that public trust in the integrity, objectivity, impartiality and credibility of the CAEAL Accreditation Program is conserved and enhanced. General qualifications that we seek are that: the individuals have a good working knowledge of the CAEAL Accreditation Program; have at least five years in a senior management or senior technical role; have at least five years in a technical field of science; and volunteer to undertake a one-day Council orientation session.

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