



**CALA**

Canadian Association for  
Laboratory Accreditation Inc.

Building Laboratory  
Excellence

Vers l'excellence  
dans les laboratoires

Suite 102, 2934 Baseline Rd.  
Ottawa, Ontario K2H 1B2

t. (613) 233-5300 f. (613) 233-5501  
www.cala.ca

September 8, 2017

RE: Update: The Changing ISO/IEC 17025 Standard

As a valued customer and an applicant or accredited laboratory in the CALA Accreditation Program, we want to ensure that you are aware of the upcoming changes to ISO/IEC 17025 and the impact to your laboratory.

Accreditation is based on demonstrated conformance to the ISO/IEC 17025 standard – *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*. The Final Draft International Standard (FDIS) has been released, and it is expected that the revised standard will be published in November or December 2017.

CALA is collaborating with the Standards Council of Canada (SCC), Bureau de normalisation du Québec (BNQ) and National Research Council Calibration Laboratory Assessment Services (NRC-CLAS) to establish a harmonized approach for the transition of accredited laboratories in Canada. The group has come to consensus on some key issues, as outlined below.

### Timelines

The following timelines have been proposed:

- Laboratories can be assessed to the revised version of ISO/IEC 17025 one (1) month after publication of the revised standard, subject to assessor availability.
- Laboratories assessed one (1) year after the publication date of the revised standard will have to be assessed to the revised standard; at that time, assessments will no longer be conducted to the 2005 version of the standard. The main reason for this deadline is that all accredited laboratories must be accredited to the revised version three (3) years after the publication date, and with reassessments done every two (2) years, this plan should enable laboratories to demonstrate conformance without needing to undergo any special assessments to confirm successful transition. We are inviting comments/feedback on this from all stakeholders as soon as possible so we can confirm the official timelines.

While this three-year transition phase may at first glance appear long, it must be kept in mind that if a reassessment normally occurs in the autumn of an “even”

year (2018, 2020, etc...), there are implications if the transition is left too late; laboratories will likely have to be assessed to the revised version of the standard by August 2020 in order to have any corrective actions reviewed and approved by November – December 2020.

### Support for Laboratories

It is the responsibility of the laboratory to conform to the new standard. To support you during the transition, CALA is offering a new course starting in September titled “*ISO/IEC 17025:2017 - What’s New or Different?*”.

A webinar providing an overview of the revised standard is running on September 21. Sign up for *An Illuminating Walk Through ISO/IEC 17025:2017 FDIS* at [www.cala.ca/training](http://www.cala.ca/training).

The course titled *Understanding ISO/IEC 17025* has been updated to the revised version of the standard.

For more details and to sign up for any of these courses or webinars, please visit [www.cala.ca/training](http://www.cala.ca/training). Remember that CALA members get 15% off their training fees.

A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page is being produced by the group (CALA, SCC, BNQ, NRC-CLAS), and the goal is to have it published in the early autumn. The FAQs will be updated regularly based on the questions and comments that will be received from customers, assessors and stakeholders and will remain available during the 3-year transition period.

### Assessor Training

Plans are underway for some joint assessor training, to ensure that accreditation bodies have the capacity to offer assessments early in 2018 if requested to do so; of course, all CALA assessors will receive training at the assessor training planned for April 26-27, 2018 (the “biennial”). Assessors will receive direct communication about these and other assessor training opportunities.

### What do you need to do?

It is not too soon for Laboratory Managers to start thinking about this transition, and consideration should be given to preparing a transition plan to the revised standard, which CALA will request from you at a later date.

Moving through this process, please do not hesitate to share your ideas or questions by contacting me directly at [ccotter@cala.ca](mailto:ccotter@cala.ca). We will keep you informed as changes and updates are available, and the most up-to-date information on transitioning will be posted on the CALA web site ([www.cala.ca](http://www.cala.ca)).

Colleen Cotter  
Accreditation Manager