



**Transitioning Your  
Laboratory To The New  
*ISO/IEC 17025: 2017*  
Standard** PAGE 26

# Transitioning Your Laboratory To The New *ISO/IEC 17025: 2017* Standard

Helga A. Alexander and Dr. George Anastasopoulos  
International Accreditation Service (IAS)

The *ISO/IEC 17025* standard, *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*, was first issued in 1999 by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electro-technical Commission (IEC). It is the single most important standard for calibration and testing laboratories around the world, with more than 50,000 laboratories accredited world-wide. Since its inception, the standard has been revised twice, in 2005 and most recently in November 2017. This third revision of the standard contains some significant changes, for which laboratories and accreditation bodies alike have to get prepared.

There is a 3-year transition period during which time laboratories can be accredited to either the 2005 version or the 2017 version of the standard. While each Accreditation Body may determine their own policy on how to handle their laboratories' transition to the new revision of the standard, they all face the same deadline. By December 1, 2020, all accredited laboratories, regardless of which Accreditation Body granted their accreditation, must have completed the transition to the new *ISO/IEC 17025:2017*.

This article aims to inform the reader of the transition policy of the International Accreditation Service (IAS), a nonprofit, public-benefit corporation that has been providing accreditation services since 1975. A significant part of IAS is dedicated to the accreditation of laboratories to the *ISO/IEC 17025* standard, through a rigorous process that includes direct observation by qualified assessors of technical expertise. IAS also provides accreditation to several other international and

national standards, including ISO 15189, ISO/IEC 17020, ISO/IEC 17065, and many others. IAS is a subsidiary of the International Code Council (ICC), a professional membership association that develops the construction codes and standards used by most municipalities within the United States. IAS accredits a wide range of companies and organizations including governmental entities, commercial businesses, and professional associations. IAS accreditation programs are based on recognized national and international standards that ensure domestic and/or global acceptance of its accreditations. As one of the leading accreditation bodies in the United States, IAS is a signatory to the four primary international organizations (IAF, ILAC, PAC, APLAC) that form a unified system for evaluating and recognizing competent accreditation bodies worldwide.

In order to ensure a successful transition of all laboratories currently accredited by IAS to ISO/IEC 17025:2005, as well as to ensure accommodation of the growing demand for ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation from laboratories worldwide who are new to ISO/IEC 17025, IAS developed the following transition timeline:

### February 1, 2018:

IAS started accepting renewal or new applications to ISO/IEC 17025:2017

### February 1, 2018 to November 30, 2018:

IAS performs assessments to ISO/IEC 17025:2017 or ISO/IEC 17025:2005, depending on the laboratory's needs and preferences

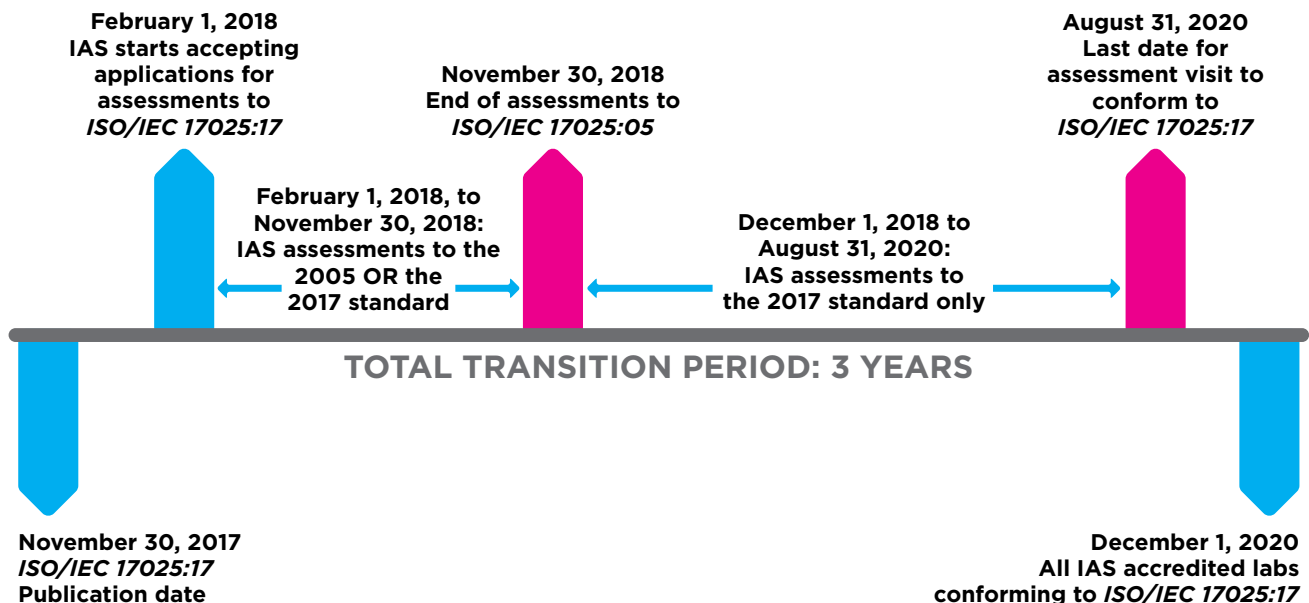
### December 1, 2018:

IAS starts assessing to the new standard: ISO/IEC 17025:2017

### August 31, 2020:

Last date for a laboratory accredited to ISO/IEC 17025:2005 to receive an IAS assessment audit for ISO/IEC 17025:2017 without a potential lapse of accreditation status

**The diagram below aims to further illustrate this timeline.**



In addition to developing a transition timeline and training its assessor corps on the new standard, IAS is offering *ISO/IEC 17025:2017* training events and materials to help laboratories better understand the new standard's requirements. Details of the IAS training program can be obtained at the IAS website at <https://www.iasonline.org/training/> or by contacting the authors.

**In order to ensure a successful transition, laboratory managers should take the following steps:**

- > Purchase the new *ISO/IEC 17025:2017* standard (available from various sources, including the NCSLI website and at ICC (<http://shop.iccsafe.org/standards.html>))
  - > Read the standard and learn how to interpret and implement the new requirements;
  - > Take advantage of training opportunities offered by IAS (for more details, see <https://www.iasonline.org/training/>)
  - > Decide on your overall timeline for transitioning your lab, taking into consideration when your next re-assessment is due, and/or discuss your organization's needs with your accreditation body.
  - > Train your lab personnel who will be responsible for the transition and implementation;
  - > Conduct a gap analysis between the existing quality system and the requirements in the revised standard;
  - > Update your management system documentation. This includes updates to existing policies and procedures as required, plus the removal/modification/addition of policies and procedures. Hint: Grab the opportunity that the new standard is providing to reduce management system documentation;
  - > Create a training plan and a communication plan for all laboratory personnel;
- Implement the new and revised management system.
- > Consider attending a metrology conference to listen to presentations on *ISO/IEC 17025:2017*, question the experts and discuss the new requirements with your colleagues from other laboratories.

By careful preparation and timely action, all laboratories can not only ensure a successful transition to the new *ISO/IEC 17025:2017* prior to December 2020, but can also use the transition to improve their laboratory management system and processes.

**About the authors:**

Helga A. Alexander (halexander@iasonline.org), IAS Calibration Program Manager, is in charge of the calibration accreditation program at IAS. Ms. Alexander has extensive experience as a calibration laboratory manager, ISO/IEC 17025 assessor and ISO 9001 quality system manager and auditor. Ms. Alexander holds a B.S. and M.S. degree in Physics.

Dr. George Anastasopoulos (ganastasopoulos@iasonline.org), IAS Director of Conformity Assessment, is a Mechanical Engineer with an MSc and a PhD in Applied Mechanics from Northwestern University, IL. As a member of ISO/TC176 and ISO/CASCO technical committees he has contributed to the development of the ISO 9001:2015 and new ISO/IEC 17025:2017 standards. Dr. Anastasopoulos, recipient of the 2015 EOQ Presidential Georges Borel Award, participated in numerous consulting, research, training and assessment projects sponsored by government and industry in USA, European Union and many other countries worldwide.



# EXPERIENCE

Ultimate Automation



**CPC6050**  
MODULAR PRESSURE CONTROLLER



**mensor**