

Letter from the President

From the President's Desk



It just seems like yesterday that we bid adieu to 2020, Auld Lang Syne and COVID distant New Year greetings! On the negative-side; lost travel, lack of customer meetings, remote assessments, office shutdown, and, on the

positive-side; more family time, greater interaction through web-based tools, a surprisingly higher number of new customer sign-ups, and lesser cost to the current customers due to diminished travel expenses, etc. On the balance, the loss of human contact and lack of customer interaction in-person, made 2020 a lonely year for sure!

Meanwhile, IAS staff and assessors were busy. We launched several new accreditation programs: Forensic Laboratory Accreditation, Reference Material Producer (RMP) program, Proficiency Testing Provider (PTP) program, California ELAP (Environmental Laboratory Program), Building Department Accreditation- ISO (Insurance Services Organization) joint program, Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), and the U.S. FDA ASCA Program, among others. Further, the IAS Accreditation Programs under AC371 and AC372 were consolidated under a single technical criterion.

Since, the last Newsletter, the IAS accreditation Committee met twice under the leadership of Neville Pereira to review and vote on several criteria. The various IAS Technical Advisory Councils, (TACs) we have 8 of them, met to discuss and provide insightful advice on a variety of matters relating to their respective conformity assessment programs. Review of each of the TACs agendas and minutes indicate very vigorous committees and shows the contribution of our stakeholders to enhance our technical rigor in many respects. I encourage individuals who wish to serve on our TACs to reach out to IAS management and/or staff.

The IAS training team under Ned Gravel's leadership with able support from Jouliana Tchiloyans, Laura Uraine, and Greg West among others conducted over 50 sessions with 1200+ participants in a variety of disciplines. It emphasizes my message that knowledge sharing and knowledge transfer benefit both the trainees and trainers. This certainly has enhanced a deeper appreciation among our technical assessors on the nuances in all the relevant standards. Please visit our [training page](#) to see all our offerings as well as some technical videos for your needs.

IAS' Customer Success Group, under Greg West's leadership has stepped up to fill the breach during the past 12 months with a more active social media presence. You may also have noticed our Spanish-language tweets as well as other communication media to reach out to our global family. We will be working further in 2021 to enhance our presence in other languages too. I encourage all the readers to connect with us on social media and share your feedback and comments.

In closing, the IAS Board, comprised of volunteer members, have done a yeoman's job this past year meeting multiple times to review and discharge their oversight and fiduciary duties on some significant matters. Under the able guidance of Chairman Rocco Davis, the Board gave us a patient and supportive hearing on many critical matters, and I am always thankful to them for their support.

May 2021 bring better days ahead to you, your business and your near and dear ones. I am sure the IAS team is equally anxious to come and visit you to know how to better serve the conformity assessment community. Please be safe and keep us posted on any new developments in your world as well!

Stay safe,
Raj Nathan

CONTENT

■ 2020 RECAP

- Customer Survey Results for 2020
- IAS Accreditation Committee Hearings- October and December 2020

■ NEW IAS ACCREDITATION OFFERINGS

- U.S. FDA ASCA Program
- EPA National Lead Laboratory Accreditation Program (NLLAP)
- Building Officials benefit form IAS AC472 and AC478 in low-rise construction
- Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC)
- Training and Certificate Program Recognition. Options and Possibilities

■ IAS REMEMBERS

- Curtis Mann
- Chuck Haslebach
- Charles 'Chuck' Praeger

■ WHAT HAS IAS BEEN UP TO?

- Development Forum in Athens, Greece – IAS presentation
- CIJ Cannabis Panel
- Science Timetable from 2000 BCE to 1500 BCE

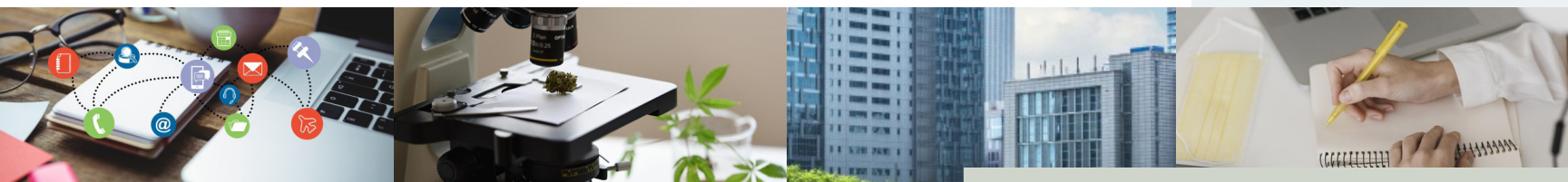
■ IAS TRAINING

- APAC Laboratory Training
- IAS Training Program 2020 Summary
- Upcoming Training Courses in 2021

■ IAS PROFILES

- Get to know Sergio Asuncion, IAS Board Member
- Assessor Spotlight – Osman Vural

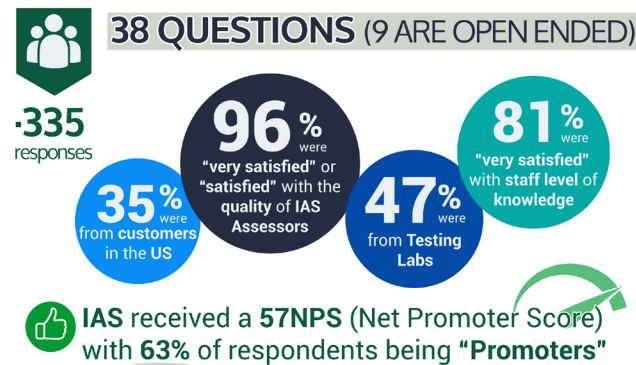
■ CONNECT WITH US



2020 RECAP

Customer Survey Results for 2020

We redesigned our customer service survey in early 2020 to help us better serve our customers. IAS customers are emailed a link to the survey when they are first accredited or renew their accreditation.



IAS appreciates customers taking the time to give such thoughtful and thorough feedback in these surveys. The question ratings and comments in the open-ended questions are helping IAS determine what we are doing right and where we need to improve.

IAS Accreditation Committee Hearings- October and December 2020

The IAS Accreditation Committee (AC) met twice in the past year to review several significant criteria revisions as well as new criteria to support the roll-out of new conformity assessment programs. The IAS AC is appointed by the IAS Board of Directors. The committee Chairperson is Mr. Neville Pereira, P.E., CBO., County of Santa Clara, San Jose, California, and the Vice Chairperson is Ms. Linda Anguish, Institute for Credentialing Excellence, Washington D.C. The membership of the committee includes individuals from our global conformity assessment community as well as experts from varied backgrounds.

During the two 2020 hearings of the AC held on October 22, 2020, and December 14, 2020, the members reviewed several criteria. Salient among the technical documents is: AC251, Accreditation Criteria for Building Departments, Code Enforcement, and Third-Parties Providing Building and/or Property Maintenance Code Enforcement Services, which is intended to bring the ISO Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS) Program into the IAS accreditation process. Also, revision and amalgamation of Accreditation Criteria for Training Agencies for Workforce Qualification Programs, AC371 and Accreditation Criteria for Curriculum Development for Workforce Qualification Programs, AC372 into a single document titled Accreditation Criteria for Training Providers and Training Course Developers to allow for a harmonized approach to training providers. Accreditation Criteria for Approval Program of Fabricators of Container-Based Structures, AC786 is intended to extend the fabrication program to include approval of container-based structures and Registration Criteria for Building Departments/Code Enforcement Agencies, RC418, a new program designed to provide a pathway to jurisdictions towards formal accreditation.

As a result of COVID, these hearings which are usually held in-person switched to virtual format and for the first time provided a wonderful opportunity for our global members to join in and contribute to the technical discussions. As in so many other instances, the COVID situation provided a significant opportunity to showcase IAS' activities, which are generally confined to the United States, to our global family. We expect that future accreditation committees will continue to see enhanced interest in our technical activities. Please check the IAS website for future notices of our AC hearings.



NEW IAS ACCREDITATION OFFERINGS

U.S. FDA ASCA Program

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has recognized IAS under the [Accreditation Scheme for Conformity Assessment \(ASCA\)](#) pilot program to accredit testing laboratories that perform premarket testing for medical device companies. In this program, IAS will accredit testing laboratories using the standard ISO/IEC 17025 and the ASCA program specifications.

Relying upon international conformity assessment standards and a set of FDA-identified ASCA program specifications, the pilot is intended to increase consistency and predictability in the FDA's approach to assessing conformance with FDA-recognized consensus standards and test methods eligible for inclusion in the ASCA Pilot in medical device premarket reviews. Ultimately, the ASCA Pilot is intended to help the FDA ensure patients have timely and continued access to safe, effective, and high-quality medical devices.

[Read more](#)



EPA National Lead Laboratory Accreditation Program (NLLAP)

IAS accredits laboratories for recognition by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) National Lead Laboratory Accreditation Program (NLLAP) as being capable of performing adequate analyses for lead in paint films (chips), dust and soil samples.

The NLLAP is an EPA program that defines the minimum requirements and abilities that a laboratory must meet to attain EPA recognition as an accredited lead testing laboratory. EPA established NLLAP to recognize laboratories that demonstrate the ability to accurately analyze paint chips, dust, or soil samples for lead.

NLLAP ensures that participating laboratories have met EPA requirements and demonstrated the capability to accurately analyze paint chips, dust, or soil samples for lead. All laboratories recognized by EPA under NLLAP are required to undergo on-site assessments conducted by an Accreditation Body participating in NLLAP (like IAS), and to successfully perform on a continual basis in the Environmental Lead Proficiency Analytical Testing (ELPAT) Program. The ELPAT is the EPA-approved laboratory performance proficiency testing program administered by the American Industrial Hygiene Association to ensure that laboratories continue to accurately analyze samples for lead.

[Read more](#)



Building Officials benefit form IAS AC472 and AC478 in low-rise construction

by Sandi McCracken, Director of Construction and Industrial Relations, IAS and Walter Mershon, Senior Technical Assessor of FA-MB-MBA programs, IAS.

It is common for building officials to hone in on the inspection of high-rise structures to ensure absolute safety in design and construction. But officials must also carefully inspect low-rise structures such as strip centers, warehouses and manufacturing facilities. When focused on the low-rise construction market, building officials can benefit from knowing about specific accreditation programs from the International Accreditation Service (IAS).

Accreditation programs



IAS provides two major accreditation programs that support building departments and industry professionals involved with the design, fabrication, installation, inspection and approval of engineered metal building systems

The IAS Metal Building Systems Inspection Accreditation Program, also known as **AC472** which is the accreditation criteria used to assess companies, audits the integrity of design engineering and manufacturing processes in metal building manufacturing facilities. IAS AC472 is the program to accredit the metal building manufacturers' inspection program. The program is based on the requirements in Chapter 17 of the International Building Code (IBC) for special inspection of fabricated items (Section 1704.2.5) and fabricator approval (Section 1704.2.5.1). Therefore, building officials can accept IAS accreditation as sufficient evidence that manufacturers have demonstrated effective implementation of a documented inspection program and are in compliance with those requirements of the International Code, eliminating the need for redundant in-shop inspections because AC472 attests the fabricator's inspection program is implemented and documented to assure the fabricated members and components quality is built into the final construction according to approved plans.

While AC472 applies to design, fabrication and inspection of the engineered metal building system before it arrives on the job site, IAS offers the Metal Building Assemblers Inspection Accreditation for companies that do the onsite assembly of metal buildings. This program is known as IAS **AC478**, the accreditation criteria developed by IAS to assess companies.

At the construction site, a building official can also reduce redundancy when observing a construction team whose standards and practices have been vetted through inspections required by AC478, the Inspection Practices of Metal Building Assemblers. It is the recognized benchmark for best practices for the inspection of metal building assemblers and is provided for all companies qualified to assemble metal buildings.

Both accreditation programs (AC472 and AC478) are recognized as a measure of quality endorsed by the Metal Building Contractors and Erectors Association, the North American Iron Workers/IMPACT Labor-Management, the Metal Building Manufacturers Association (MBMA) and the International Code Council.

"We see building owners and contractors using metal buildings for their affordability, efficiency in construction and precise engineering as they are manufactured. IAS adds reassurance for building officials and building departments who focus on code-compliant structures utilizing the IAS accredited programs," said Selso Mata, chief building official in Plano, Texas. "Our approval process is much smoother because the IAS accreditation of the metal building manufacturers inspection program, AC472, combined with the IAS accreditation of the assembly of those metal buildings, AC478, aligns and assists us with our approval process. Our building department appreciates the professionalism and technical expertise IAS accreditation adds to our process."

Read the full article [here](#)



Sales, project management, field and office support of Halme Builders, Inc., have called this state-of-the-art building their home base since 2017. Located in Davenport, Wash., this building contains a beautiful reception area, six spacious offices, a lunchroom and a board room complete with the latest technology. The large shop provides easy access for equipment through three overhead rolling doors and the mezzanine above acts as a training area for field staff and shop storage. The pre-engineered metal building system for this building was designed and fabricated by Behlen Manufacturing, an IAS AC472 accredited company (IAS Certificate of Accreditation MB-102). The building was erected by Halme Builders Inc., an IAS accredited AC478 company (IAS Certificate of Accreditation MBA-106).



Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC)

Accreditation bodies play an important role in assuring the independence and performance of certification bodies issuing PEFC certificates.

Certification Bodies in the United States can apply to IAS for accreditation against a PEFC endorsed forest management standard and/or the PEFC Chain of Custody standard.

IAS provides accreditation to certification bodies against PEFC standard ST 1003 Sustainable Forest management under the [Management Systems Certification Bodies Program](#) (ISO/IEC Standard 17021-1).

IAS also provides accreditation to certification bodies against PEFC standard ST 2002 Chain of Custody under the [Product Certification Agencies Program](#) (ISO/IEC Standard 17065).

[Read more](#)

Training and Certificate Program Recognition. Options and Possibilities



by Dr. George Anastasopoulos, VP, Global Development & Compliance, IAS

The recognition of Training and/or Certification Programs remains a

common requirement for Training Providers and Personnel Certification Bodies (PCBs). In this article, we'll explore some options for such recognition and their applicability.

It is important to note that this article is only referring to training and/or certification programs excluding traditional education degrees that are usually regulated by Education Departments and Ministries. This training can be offered by private or public organizations, institutions, unions, government agencies, employers, independent training organizations, community colleges, universities, professional and trade associations.

This article presents three distinct recognition options for training and/or certification programs. The key differences between the three programs are presented in Table 1.

Option 1: Utilizing ISO/IEC 17024, "Conformity assessment – General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons";

The first option is only applicable to Personnel Certification Bodies (PCBs) that are operating a personnel certification program that includes "certified training" as a requirement. Recognition of such training programs is limited only to the ones aimed at achieving personnel certification. This certification is provided under a scheme (certification program) that is included in the PCB's scope of accreditation. A sole training provider cannot be recognized/accredited under this option.

Option 2: Utilizing IPC SC-11-002 "Specification on Recognition of Training

Courses and Training Providers"

The second option is available to Training Providers, Certificate Program Developers, Certificate Issuers and/or Personnel Certification Bodies (PCBs) that wish to approve their Training Programs. This option provides more flexibility since it doesn't limit the fields of the training programs and doesn't interrelate them to personnel certification scheme(s), which, remains an option, if applicable.

Option 3: Utilizing ASTM E2659-18: "Standard Practice for Certificate Programs".

This option is available to Training Providers, Certificate Program Developers and Certificate Issuers. It doesn't limit the fields of the training programs and doesn't interrelate them to personnel certification scheme(s).

Read full article [here](#)

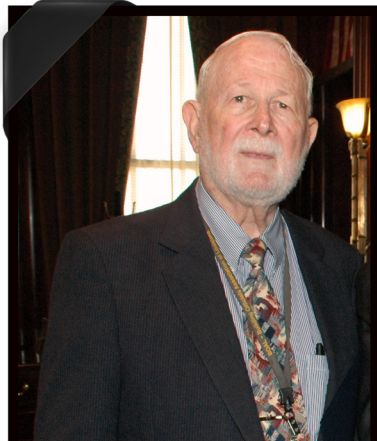


Table 1. Key differences between the three programs:

RECOGNITION STANDARD	FOR ORGANIZATION TYPES	CERTIFICATE PROGRAM TYPES	INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED?	RECOGNIZED BY WHO?
ISO/IEC 17024	PCBs	Competence Based personnel certification	Yes	IAF
IPC SC-11-002	PCBs and/or Training Agencies	Competence Based personnel certification	Yes	IPC
ASTM E2659-18	Training Agencies	Knowledge based personnel recognition	Yes*	Accreditation Bodies that operate such program

*Not supported by IAF MLA.

IAS REMEMBERS



Curtis Mann
Former IAS Board Member

Curtis Mann who served on the IAS Board of Directors at its inception has passed away. Not only was he a strong voice to support the birth and growth of IAS, Mann was a kind and generous mentor. Raj Nathan, President, IAS, noted many a fond memory of discussions on IAS' future during Board meetings and ICC Annual conferences. IAS extends our deepest gratitude to Mrs. Vera Mann and the family for sharing Curtis Mann with the IAS family. We wish to place on the record our gratitude for his services on the IAS Board as well as his commitment to grow the accreditation services. His passing was also noted at the February 25, 2021, IAS Board meeting.

Mann was instrumental in New Orleans adopting the Southern Building Code, a predecessor of the International Building Code. Because of his dedication to public safety, Mann was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Louisiana Engineering Society for distinguished service in management by an engineer.

In 2013, the Curtis Mann Award was created by the Building Officials Association of Louisiana (BOAL) to honor building officials exemplifying the highest standard of integrity and professionalism, accomplishments and achievements in code enforcement.



Chuck Haslebach
of Varco Pruden Buildings and BlueScope

IAS extends our heartfelt condolences to the colleagues and loved ones of Chuck Haslebach upon the news of his passing. He was instrumental in working with IAS and the Metal Building Manufacturers Association (MBMA) to create the IAS Metal Building Systems Inspection Accreditation program also known as AC472. He was the former President of Varco Pruden Buildings (VP), retiring from BlueScope Buildings North America in 2019. He was inducted into the [Metal Construction Hall of Fame](#) in 2020.

Haslebach started at VP in 1980, holding numerous management positions in engineering, sales and administration. He will be remembered by his calm and enduring leadership, and his depth of knowledge of the industry and the VP business, where he brought an engineer's perspective and experience to help find solutions and connect with builders.

Haslebach also served on the Metal Building Manufacturers Association (MBMA) Board of Directors and its predecessor Executive Committee for many years, as well as serving as the association's chairman in 2011. He also shared his passion for the metal building industry by serving as the chairman of MBMA's Accreditation Committee for several years.

Lee Shoemaker, Ph.D., PE, MBMA director of research and engineering and Hall of Fame inductee, added, "Chuck exemplified the MBMA culture, which was very inclusive. Some of the larger members reached out to smaller members to offer help to get accreditation. Chuck was involved in developing workshops to help all members understand what they needed to do. Even though they were competitors, companies understood how important it was to have a strong accreditation program for the industry. Chuck showed that through his leadership."



Charles 'Chuck' Praeger
of MBMA and Thomas Associates

IAS extends their condolences to the colleagues and loved ones of Charles "Chuck" Praeger upon the news of his passing. He was the former vice president at [Cleveland-based Thomas Associates Inc.](#) and assistant general manager at [Metal Building Manufacturer Association \(MBMA\)](#) for 20 years, from 1995 until his retirement in 2014. Mr. Praeger spent most of his career in the metal construction industry beginning with Armco Building Systems in 1967.

During his tenure, Mr. Praeger led MBMA through a period of significant growth. He worked on the development of the IAS AC472 accreditation program, creation of the associate member program, and introduction of the education, energy and sustainability committees.

During his career, Mr. Praeger saw the use of metal building systems grow from a small market share to widespread use. During the 1970s and 1980s, metal building system manufacturers faced many challenges in gaining acceptance and confidence among stakeholders for their products.

Raj Nathan, President, IAS, recalled many fond memories of pleasant and insightful discussions during the development of the AC472 program. "Chuck was always a consummate professional and very genial to approach to discuss any difficult issues." Sandi McCracken, who led the IAS team on technical discussions with Chuck and MBMA leadership fondly recalled the steady guidance he provided to the whole MBMA fraternity.

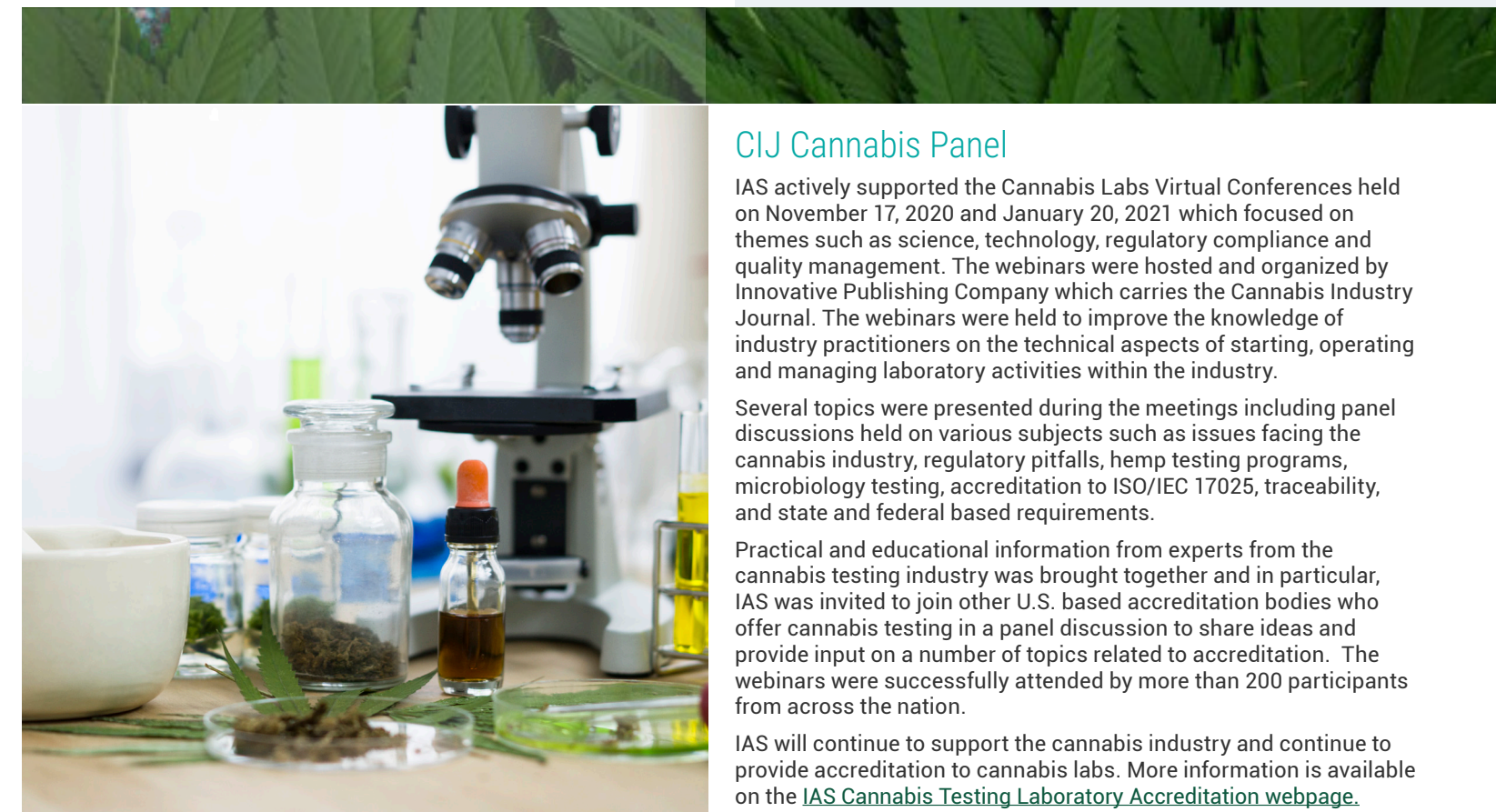
WHAT HAS IAS BEEN UP TO?

Development Forum in Athens, Greece – IAS presentation

Dr. George Anastasopoulos, IAS VP for Global Development & Compliance, participated at the 23rd Annual Development Forum that was organized, remotely from November 23 to December 2, 2020, in Athens, Greece. The topic of this year's conference was dedicated on the interconnection of academia (colleges, universities etc.) with the actual economy, industry and employment market.

Dr. Anastasopoulos gave a lecture on the role of Accreditation as a mechanism to build up market confidence between industry and educational institutions. He also explained the different accreditation programs offered by IAS that can be utilized by Academia, emphasizing on IAS AC371 for Training Providers, IAS AC474 for Personnel Certification and IAS AC89 for Testing Laboratories. He concluded his presentation with actual case studies from Universities accredited by IAS.

Others who participated in the same discussion panel included Mr. Adonis Georgiadis, Minister of Industry and Development of Greece, Prof. Vasilios Digalakis, Deputy Minister of Education of Greece, Prof. Kleomenis Mparlos, Chairman of Western Greece Industries Association, Prof. Stathis Efstathopoulos, head of Medical Physics at University of Athens, Dr. Konstantinos Karamanhs Professor of Economics at University of Ioannina and Prof. Odiseas Zioras, Chairman of the Open University of Greece.



CIJ Cannabis Panel

IAS actively supported the Cannabis Labs Virtual Conferences held on November 17, 2020 and January 20, 2021 which focused on themes such as science, technology, regulatory compliance and quality management. The webinars were hosted and organized by Innovative Publishing Company which carries the Cannabis Industry Journal. The webinars were held to improve the knowledge of industry practitioners on the technical aspects of starting, operating and managing laboratory activities within the industry.

Several topics were presented during the meetings including panel discussions held on various subjects such as issues facing the cannabis industry, regulatory pitfalls, hemp testing programs, microbiology testing, accreditation to ISO/IEC 17025, traceability, and state and federal based requirements.

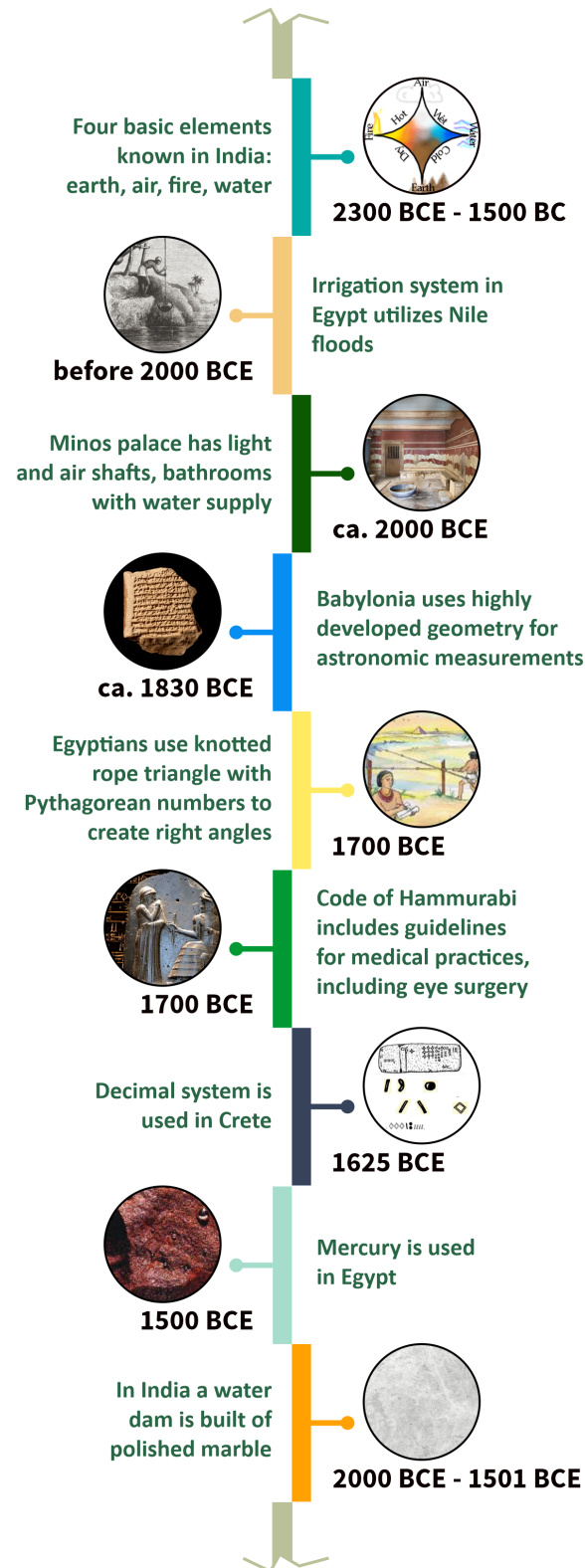
Practical and educational information from experts from the cannabis testing industry was brought together and in particular, IAS was invited to join other U.S. based accreditation bodies who offer cannabis testing in a panel discussion to share ideas and provide input on a number of topics related to accreditation. The webinars were successfully attended by more than 200 participants from across the nation.

IAS will continue to support the cannabis industry and continue to provide accreditation to cannabis labs. More information is available on the [IAS Cannabis Testing Laboratory Accreditation webpage](#).

Science Timetable from 2000 BCE to 1500 BCE

Prepared by Emil Hazarian, IAS Assessor

This Science Timetable rubric is intended to bring remarkable national, and international science events, memorable dates, and unusual science facts from the past and present, in a brief chronological format. This timeline illustrates relevant developments from 2300 BCE to 1500 BCE.



IAS TRAINING



APAC Laboratory Training

Together with colleagues from Canada's NRC-CLAS and Hong Kong's HKAS accreditation bodies, IAS Calibration Program Manager Helga Alexander provided five 4-hour sessions of training to APAC members and affiliates in November of 2020. The training was entitled "Accreditation

of Calibration Laboratories and Measurement Uncertainty (ISO/IEC 17025:2017)" and was intended for APAC Peer Evaluators and member AB's assessors.

The training was originally scheduled as in-person training in Ottawa, Canada, but had to be provided remotely via Zoom as a result of the pandemic. The training had approximately 70 participants from around the world, and despite the remote setting, the trainers were able to generate lots of questions and lively discussions.



IAS Training Program 2020 Summary

The IAS training program offers various classes that cover our multiple accreditation programs. IAS planned the delivery of 48 training courses in 2020. Very soon after the start of the year, it became clear that in-person courses were going to be severely restricted because of the pandemic. In fact, only two courses were delivered in January and February before IAS decided to start switching to online training formats.

From February 2020 to May 2020, 36 courses were converted to online webinars and self-paced online training. Throughout 2020, IAS also delivered 10 webinars directly to client sites for courses such as ISO/IEC 17021, ISO/IEC 17025, IAF MD, AC 291, and Internal Audit. The IAS Training Department created 10 new self-paced courses on the [IAS Teachable](#) online training site. Seven 90-minute ELAP webinars were delivered as well as two others regarding the ISO/IEC 17025 Decision Rule.

In all, 57 courses were delivered in 2020. Due to the increased use of online formats, IAS was able to reach over 1,250 training participants. To see all of the classes being offered in 2021, [click here](#).



Upcoming Training Courses in 2021

2021 Date	Course Name	Time Zone for Audience	Webinar Duration	Link
March 22-24	ISO 17034 Reference Material Producer Course	Middle East and South Asia	3-day	Register
March 29-31	ISO/IEC 17043 Proficiency Testing Provider Course	Middle East and South Asia	3-day	Register
April 7-8	Understanding ISO/IEC 17025 for Testing and Calibration Labs	Middle East and South Asia	2-day	Register
April 13	Need for full Corrective and Preventive Action	North and South America	90-minute	Register
April 14-15	Internal Auditing for all Standards	North and South America	2-day	Register
April 14-16	Understanding ISO/IEC 17021-1 for Management System CBs	North and South America	3-day	Register
April 19-21	Understanding ISO/IEC 17021-1 for Management System CBs	Middle East and South Asia	3-day	Register
April 27-28	Understanding ISO/IEC 17024 for Personnel Certification Bodies	North and South America	2-day	Register
May 4	Writing a Quality Manual ELAP #10	North and South America	90-minute	TBA
May 5-6	Understanding ISO/IEC 17065 for Product Certification Bodies	Middle East and South Asia	2-day	Register
May 12-13	Special Inspection Agencies in Building Construction – NYC Focus – AC291	New York, US	2-day	Register
May 17-18	ISO 15189:2012 Understanding the requirements.	Middle East and South Asia	2-day	Register
May 19-20	Understanding ISO/IEC 17025 for Testing and Calibration Labs	North and South America	2-day	Register
May 24-25	IAF MD Training for PCB and MSCB Assessors	Middle East and South Asia	2-day	Register
May 25-26	IAF MD Training for PCB and MSCB Assessors	North and South America	2-day	Register

IAS PROFILES

Get to know Sergio Ascunce, IAS Board Member



Mr. Ascunce became a member of the IAS Board of Directors (BOD) in 2019. He currently lives in Hialeah, Florida and works as a Deputy Building Official for the Miami-Dade County Building Department. Here are some insights into his career path and his experience as an IAS board member.

Q: Tell us about your path to becoming a building official

A: My journey to becoming a building official started in the early 90's during a downturn in the economy. I had recently obtained my contractor's license in Florida and was getting my business up and running. With the uncertainty over where the next check was coming from, I turned to the public sector. In the years leading up to becoming a contractor, I worked with architects and contractors and learned about the permit and inspection process. Becoming an inspector was a natural path for me at the time. I was looking for the stability and benefits offered by the public sector. The local jurisdiction required licensure as an inspector (this was before the state began certifying inspectors). Having a four-year college degree in engineering, vast construction and architecture experience and a contractor's license, qualified me for the local inspector's license.

I spent the first eight years as a field inspector strengthening my knowledge of the local codes and learning how to inspect a variety of construction projects. As a young inspector I was

privileged to be mentored by one of the notable building officials in South Florida. I guess my dedication to the profession and willingness to learn was noticed as I was latter promoted to chief inspector working alongside the building official in one of the jurisdictions. During the next four years as chief inspector, I got the opportunity to review the department processes and policies to streamline the permit process and created procedures for all categories of staff to follow. During this time, the state of Florida began to certify inspectors and created other categories for plan examiners and building officials. I set a path to additional licenses by passing my plan examiner's and building official's certifications.

Having the building official's certification qualified me to apply for a job as a building official for a local municipality. The opportunity came when a newly incorporated city in South Florida was seeking its first building official. I was hired and got the opportunity to create a building department from scratch. I brought together what I had learned as an inspector and chief in my prior experience and opened the city's first full-service building department on time. This was a unique opportunity that afforded me the ability to grow professionally.

Q: How / when did you become familiar with IAS?

A: I became familiar with IAS years ago while networking with the International Code Council (ICC) Board of Directors. During that time, I was an officer with my state's chapter of ICC, the Building Official Association of Florida (BOAF). The more I interacted with ICC, the more I learned about ICC and its subsidiaries, like IAS. One of the first things I learned about IAS was its Building Department Accreditation Program.

Subsequently, a former member of the IAS Board of Directors called me and offered to recommend my appointment to the board. I was honored by his call and his thinking that I was worthy of such an appointment. I questioned if I had the qualifications to sit on such a notable board, but I was up to the challenge. I knew that from my point of view as a building official with 28-years of experience, I had something to offer. In hindsight, I would have regretted turning down the challenge.

Q: What do you enjoy most about being part of a BOD?

A: One of the things I enjoy most about being part of the BOD is listening and learning from the other members of the board and staff. As experts in their field, I listen to what they add to the various topics of conversation. It's a real privilege to be part of the BOD and given the opportunity to offer what I know and be able to participate with exceptional board members and staff.

Additionally, I enjoy getting to know about the intricacies of the IAS business. It's amazing what I have come to learn in the short tenure as a member. I have found that IAS is not just about building department accreditation but much more. Learning about the various accreditations offered at IAS to meet certain industry standards, it's mind boggling how much effort goes into the business.

Q: What is the most challenging aspect of being a board member?

A: The most challenging part of being part of the BOD has to be getting up to speed with the business of IAS to make sound decisions. I'm the type of person that wants to know everything quickly and I have learned over time to have patience with myself and slow my anxiety. I'm eased with the fact that I can rely on the competency of staff to answer questions and hear their explanations of the subject at hand. But I'm challenged with making sure that I ask the right questions to offer the best decisions.

Q: Do you have any funny or interesting anecdotes you can share about being an IAS Board Member?

A: On my first BOD meeting at the IAS office, I got to meet the staff members. I learned that I shared a common taste for Cuban coffee with one of them. What I found amusing was that I thought Cuban coffee was something of South Florida's Latin community. I wouldn't have guessed that someone on the west coast would use the potent coffee to make "café con leche" or coffee with milk, a Latin style latte. The staff member remarked how difficult it was to get real Cuban coffee at the local groceries, so I mailed him a bag of coffee when I got back home. It was nice to see how certain customs were growing across the country.



Assessor Spotlight – Osman Vural

Mr. Osman Vural has been doing assessments for IAS since 2014. He graduated from Gazi University in Ankara, Turkey in 1989 as a Civil Engineer. Following graduation, Mr. Vural worked for a brief period in construction projects as junior site engineer.

He began working at the Turkish Standards Institute after finishing his military service. During Mr. Vural's work in the Turkish Standard

Institute he was in the construction project department, and later transferred to the World Bank project team and was included in the Istanbul Laboratory Campus construction and development project. After two years of working on this project, he was named as a project engineer for the Izmir Regional Directorate of the Turkish Standards Institute and began working as a control engineer for the ongoing construction work in the campus. At the same time, Mr. Vural served in construction and material laboratory as an engineer and a chief, respectively. During this time, he became interested in quality management systems and calibration subjects as well.

In 1997, Mr. Vural resigned from his position at the Institute and set up his own consulting business. From 1997 to 1999, he served different industry companies as a management systems consultant. He set up Turkey's 11th calibration laboratory at the end of 1999 and started delivering industrial-level calibration services with his team.

In 2003, within his group of companies, Mr. Vural formed an e-commerce company and started the online distribution business of 21 global instrumentation brands in Turkey. It was the first e-commerce site in Turkey in the field of instrumentation. In 2004, he started to operate in the field of conformity assessment and management systems certification. At the end of 2006, Mr. Vural set up Turkey's first private accredited personnel certification body, which widened his companies' field of service. Until 2014, he worked on several academic research projects as well. Mr. Vural also provided several training courses on quality, calibration and management systems.

In addition to these duties, Mr. Vural became a member of the International Personnel Certification Association (IPC) in 2007. He was elected as a board member in 2010 and was elected the chairman of the association in 2015, serving two consecutive terms. Mr. Vural is still a board member of the IPC. In 2014, he founded the Aegean Management Consultants Association and served as its Chairman. Mr. Vural also served as a board member of the Federation of Manufacturer and Businessmen of Western Anatolia between 2018-2020.

When he isn't doing assessments for IAS, Mr. Vural enjoys setting up websites as a hobby. He also produces and presents a weekly podcast program on management systems and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), called Mikro-pedya. A self-proclaimed motorcycle enthusiast, he currently resides in Izmir, Turkey with his wife and two children. Here's what Mr. Osman Vural had to say about doing assessments for IAS.

Q: What is your favorite part of doing assessments?

A: To be involved in an accreditation assessment is to be in an incredibly diverse and non-repetitive work environment. Of course, getting to know new businesses and practices, cultures, and traveling regularly is also very cool. At the end, you notice that the best aspect of this work is to provide input which will contribute to a conformity assessment bodies' processes operating in any region of the world.

Q: What creates a positive assessment experience?

A: As an assessor, your experience and process knowledge in the field you are assessing are important. You must also be a good listener and good observer. In addition, I believe if you understand the processes well, you can establish maximum communication with the customer during the assessment. If the assessment team and the customer understand each other very well, I think the result is always a positive experience.

Q: How should a customer prepare for an assessment?

A: I don't think special preparation for accreditation assessments is necessary. An effective internal audit and management review are helpful mechanisms in both management and preparedness for the assessment. However, if a conformity assessment body (CAB) tries to improve their processes only a few days before the assessment and only focuses on a successful evaluation, we as assessors, witness their processes are more inefficient and challenging.

Q: What is your advice to a company seeking accreditation?

A: I can advise a few things; start by understanding the philosophy of the accreditation mechanism. Accreditation is not just an audit and certification. Accreditation is a process that adds value and provides a scientific trust mechanism to interested parties. Firstly, CABs need to understand all the related standards and guidance published and applied internationally in their field. Secondly, CABs should implement the rules and terms according to their culture and natural environment, copying someone else's quality documentation should be avoided. Thirdly, continually train employees as it automatically leads to a better structured management system and a technically competent environment. Lastly, I would advise CABs to understand their customer's needs and choose their technical equipment and accreditation scope accordingly.

Q: How did you start doing assessments for IAS?

A: In 2011, I was involved in an IAS accredited calibration lab and personnel certification body. This was my introduction to IAS. Through the years, I became interested in taking a role in the IAS accreditation process and I applied to become an assessor. Then in 2014, I began my on-site evaluation and trainee period. At the end of 2014, I was assigned to the IAS assessment team as technical assessor.

Q: What is the value of accreditation in your opinion?

A: Accreditation is not only a tool to deliver internal improvement and to meet regulatory compliance, but businesses show that it can have a positive effect on revenue. Also, customers perceive an accredited certification provides value for the money. It is both a good marketing tool and a control mechanism. It's also the most impartial evidence of compliance with international standards and requirements and proves that CABs have the competence and impartiality necessary to do so.



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