

MARCH 2024

IAS AccreditCom®

ELAP Lab Edition

NEWSLETTER



Dear IAS ELAP Community,

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the 2024 IAS AccreditCom: ELAP Lab Edition! This first edition of AccreditCom will focus on the California State Waterboard Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP). As the sole California-based Non-Governmental Accreditation Body (NGAB) authorized to conduct third-party assessments for ELAP accreditation, the International Accreditation Service (IAS) is delighted to extend a warm greeting to all our valued customers and stakeholders. At IAS, we are committed to delivering timely and professional services to meet your accreditation needs. We trust that you found our series of educational webinars in 2023 informative, and we are excited to announce that this initiative will continue throughout the upcoming year. In this edition of the newsletter, we aim to keep you informed and engaged with updates, insights, and highlights from the world of ELAP accreditation. Your feedback will be helpful, and we invite you to share your thoughts on how we can further enhance our services to better serve you in the year ahead. Thank you for your continued engagement with IAS as we strive for excellence together.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Raj Nathan". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Raj Nathan
President

International Accreditation Service (IAS)

Expanding Your Lab's Scope? Plan Ahead

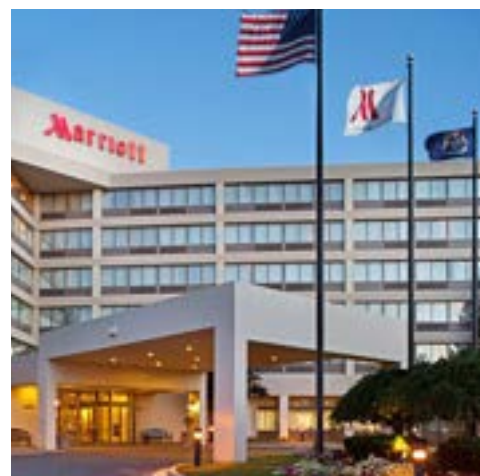
Inform IAS about any new tests or Fields of Accreditation that you would like to have added to your assessment prior to your next onsite assessment. This will enable our assessors to ensure that they have enough time on-site to include these additional methods in the assessment agendas. If you cannot wait until your next scheduled assessment to add any new tests, you can always schedule a separate scope expansion assessment as well.

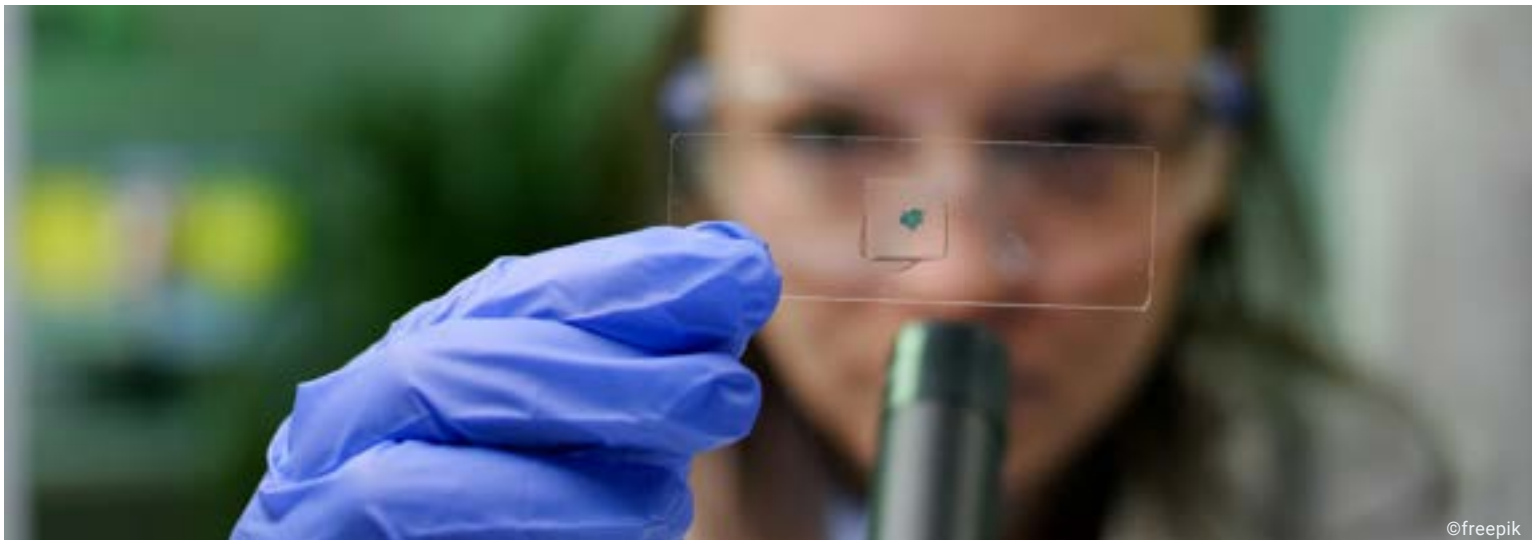
Certificates of Insurance for Assessments

Many jurisdictions require a Certificate of Insurance (COI) from IAS before scheduling an assessment. For those laboratories that are already customers of IAS and have previously received a COI, IAS is automatically renewing your COI with our insurance carrier, and it will be forwarded to you. If you need IAS to provide your lab with a COI, please be specific with IAS about your COI requirements to avoid delays in issuance. For those who need a COI, email elap@iasonline.org.

IAS ELAP Symposium - September 19

Join us for the IAS ELAP Symposium on September 19, 2024, at the Fullerton Marriott at California State University, Fullerton, California. This one-day educational event promises valuable insights into ELAP accreditation requirements and a wealth of other essential information, ensuring you to stay ahead in the ever-evolving landscape of laboratory standards and practices. Don't miss the chance to connect with fellow laboratory professionals, IAS Assessors, and Staff. This event is a unique opportunity to foster collaborations, share experiences, and expand your professional network. Stay tuned for updates as we unveil more details about the event. Additional information, including the agenda, speakers, and registration details, will be shared soon. Mark your calendar now and make plans to be a part of this enriching experience. The IAS ELAP Symposium is your gateway to knowledge, networking, and professional growth.





Common Findings from Lab Assessments

It is not uncommon for IAS assessors to see the same problem areas during assessments of multiple laboratories. Below are a few of the very common findings. Being aware of these problem areas can help your lab be better prepared for the next assessment.

[Approved Test Methods](#)

2016 TNI V1M2 5.4.1: The laboratory shall use appropriate methods and procedures for all tests within its scope.

Finding: (a) It is very common for labs to not follow approved test methods as written, which sometimes can lead to missing even the smallest steps of the method.

[Records Control](#)

2016 TNI V1M2 4.13.2.1: The laboratory shall retain records of original observations, derived data, and sufficient information to establish an audit trail, calibration records, staff records, and a copy of each test report issued.

2016 TNI V1M2 4.13.2.2: Observations, data, and calculations shall be recorded at the time they are made and shall be identifiable to the specific task.

2016 TNI V1M2 4.13.3.a: The laboratory shall establish a record keeping system allowing the history of the sample and associated data to be readily understood through the documentation. The system shall produce unequivocal, accurate records documenting all laboratory activities such as laboratory facilities, equipment, analytical methods, and related laboratory activities, such as sample receipt, sample preparation, or data verification, and inter-laboratory transfers of samples and/or extracts.

2016 TNI V1M2 4.13.3.f: All information necessary for the historical reconstruction of data shall be maintained by the laboratory.

Finding: All of the 4.13 requirements listed here point to records control. They are not necessarily interchangeable, but they do all point to traceability in records, lack of records, incomplete records, etc. It is rare to find an assessment report without one of these findings.

[Documents](#)

2016 TNI V1M2 4.3.1: The laboratory shall establish and maintain procedures to control all documents forming part of

its management system (internally generated or from external sources), such as regulations, standards, other normative documents, test methods, as well as drawings, software, specifications, instructions, and manuals.

2016 TNI V1M2 4.3.2.1: All documents issued to personnel in the laboratory as part of the management system shall be reviewed and approved for use by authorized personnel prior to use. A master list or an equivalent document control procedure identifying the current revision status and distribution of documents in the management system shall be established and shall be readily available to preclude the use of invalid and/or obsolete documents.

Finding: Similar to records control, it is rare to see a lab without one of these findings. They also are not interchangeable, but point to documents not being controlled, not having a master list, not including all documents in the master list, etc.

[Corrective Actions](#)

2016 TNI V1M2 4.11.2: The procedure for corrective action shall start with an investigation to determine the root cause(s) of the problem.

2016 TNI V1M2 4.11.4: The laboratory shall monitor the results to ensure the corrective actions taken have been effective.

Finding: (a) Labs experience difficulty in performing a corrective action properly.

When the lab reports a root cause statement as a response to a finding, to satisfy their corrective action, it's usually a restatement of the problem.

This is neither helpful to the lab in fixing their fundamental issue nor a correct response to IAS.

In general, labs struggle to understand this process.

(b) Further, most labs don't monitor corrective actions for its effectiveness.



Training Webinars

Learn about the ELAP program at your own pace and schedule, all at no cost, with the IAS ELAP Webinar Series. The series includes over twenty, one-hour webinars on various topics related to ELAP Assessments and requirements for accreditation. [More](#)

Add on ISO/IEC 17025

Is your laboratory interested in adding ISO/IEC 17025 to your scope of accreditation? This international laboratory standard can be added to your ELAP assessment or scheduled for another time. IAS can answer all your questions about how to make this happen. IAS also provides training about the ISO/IEC 17025 Standard. Learn more about ISO/IEC 17025 on the [IAS website](#) or send us your email to elap@iasonline.org.

ELAP Assessor Positions

IAS is always looking for qualified individuals interested in becoming assessors in the California Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP). If you would like more information, please [click here](#).



TNI Compliance is REQUIRED on January 1st

As of January 1, 2024, every laboratory, regardless of certificate expiration date, is required to implement the 2016 TNI Standard incorporated by reference in ELAP's regulations. ELAP will be verifying compliance! Read on to learn how and make sure your laboratory is prepared.



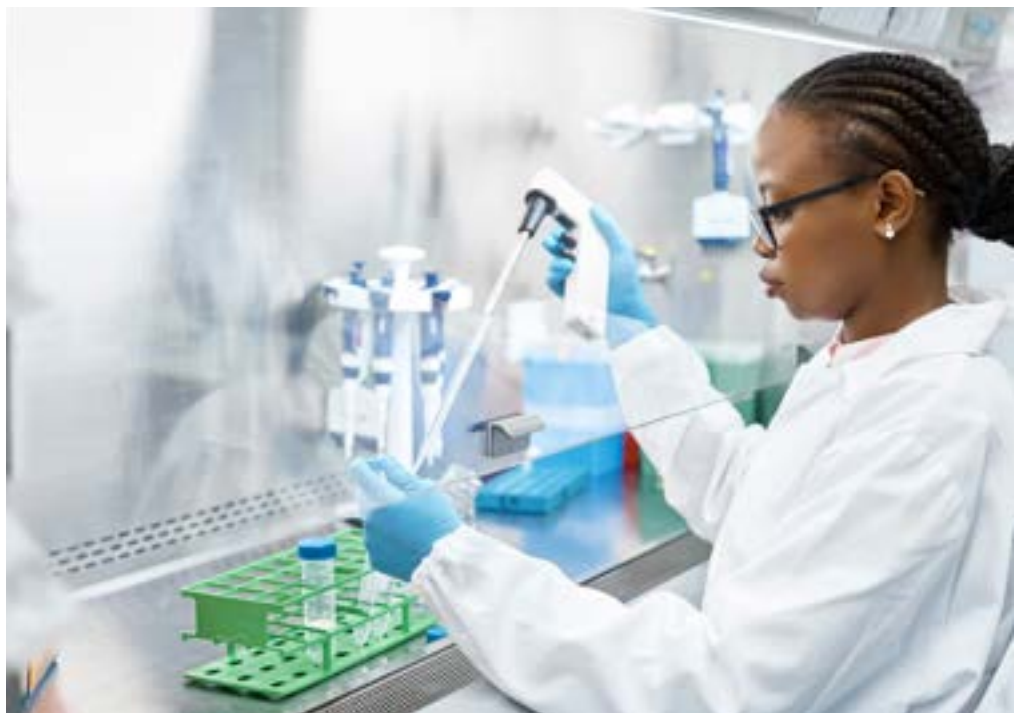
Laboratories located in California

If your laboratory has already had an assessment to the TNI Standard, whether by a third-party provider or ELAP, you can breathe easy! Nothing more is needed from you at this time. We already have record of your assessment and congratulate you on your success! Friendly reminder to be sure you are scheduling your next assessment for the right time frame by using our new and improved Scheduling Tool, available on the right side of ELAP's main webpage. We encourage you to plan early to make sure your assessment is complete before your next renewal application is due!

If you have not been assessed to the TNI Standard, ELAP will send your laboratory a written request asking for information about your plan to be assessed to the TNI Standard and requiring submittal of your TNI-compliant Quality Assurance Manual at that time. We will begin sending these notices directly to laboratories in January.

Laboratories located outside of California

If you are accredited via reciprocity, your laboratory may only apply for accreditation with ELAP using accreditation from a TNI-recognized accreditation body starting January 1, 2024. For federally regulated drinking water contaminants, this accreditation must be granted by a TNI-recognized state accreditation body. For non-drinking water or CA specific analyses, your accreditation may be granted by either a TNI-recognized state accreditation body or a TNI-recognized state accreditation body or a TNI-recognized nongovernmental accreditation body. Laboratories outside California can get TNI accreditation from IAS and then apply to CA ELAP via reciprocity.



Transition to TNI-2

2024 has arrived with bountiful updates and guidance for the approved California Third-Party Agencies like IAS to administer the laboratories to meet CA ELAP accreditation requirements. These requirements placed on IAS will affect the laboratories downstream as scheduling, planning, conducting assessments and assessment closures are undertaken:

ASSESSMENTS OCCURRING AFTER JANUARY 1, 2024

- All laboratories must comply to the “TNI Minus 2” or full TNI Standard as of January 1, 2024.
- “California Regulations only” assessments are no longer permitted.

REQUIRED CHECKLISTS.

- The “California Regulations Checklist” has been removed from the IAS website and is now obsolete.
- The “California Regulations TNI Addendum Checklist” is available on the IAS website and must be used in all CA ELAP assessments.

ON-SITE ASSESSMENT REPORTS (OSARs) AND COMPLETED ASSESSMENT PACKAGES

- Laboratories must submit their Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to IAS within 30 days of receiving their OSAR.
- All assessment packages shall be submitted to the laboratory directly from IAS upon closure of findings, by the assessors.



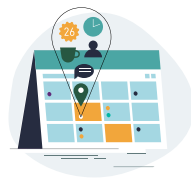
New Fields of Accreditation Added to ELAP!

The Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program has updated its Field of Accreditation (FOA) Tables at the request of the Division of Drinking Water and the Los Angeles Regional Water Board. The requested methods establish new analytical capabilities to meet the needs of the programs. The summary of additions is below and the tables can be found on ELAP’s [Application Webpage](#).

FOA Table	Parameter	Analytical Method
105	Formaldehyde	EPA 556
105	Formaldehyde	EPA 556.1
108	Sediment Concentration	ASTM D3977-97 (19)

The Division of Drinking Water requested EPA 556 and EPA 556.1 to methods for detection of Formaldehyde to meet the established [Notification Level](#). The Los Angeles Regional Board requested ASTM D3977-97 (19) to establish a method capable of determining sediment concentration as a proposed option for their [Storm Water Permit](#). Questions regarding method selection and applicability should be directed toward the respective programs. Laboratories should verify with their client(s) which method can be utilized for their monitoring.

Laboratories may apply for these methods by submitting an [amendment application](#) and relevant documentation, including an on-site assessment from an approved [Third Party Assessment Agency](#) and passing Proficiency Tests. Laboratories can contact IAS for a scope expansion for these new methods.



Events in 2024

Make plans to attend the following events in 2024.

- ➔ CWEA Annual Conference, Sacramento, CA, April 9-12, 2024 [MORE INFO](#)
- ➔ Environmental Measurement Symposium, Garden Grove, CA, August 5-9, 2024 [MORE INFO](#)
- ➔ IAS CA ELAP Customer Symposium, September 19, 2024



Additional Environmental Programs Available from IAS

Here is a list of environmental related programs where IAS provides assessments and/or accreditations. Contact IAS if you are interested in adding any of these programs to your laboratory.

- ✔ TNI (The NELAC Institute)
- ✔ ISO/IEC 17025
- ✔ DoD ELAP
- ✔ DOECAP-AP
- ✔ EPA Energy Star
- ✔ EPA WaterSense
- ✔ EPA National Lead Laboratory Accreditation Program
- ✔ EPA TSCA VI Formaldehyde Emissions
- ✔ California Air Resource Board (CARB)

What is a Pre-assessment?

A pre-assessment is a preliminary evaluation conducted before the formal assessment for your environmental laboratory's CA ELAP accreditation. The purpose of a pre-assessment is to assess the laboratory's readiness for a complete initial assessment, and is intended to identify potential areas of non-compliance with accreditation requirements and to make necessary improvements before the assessment for accreditation takes place.

During a pre-assessment, accreditation body assessors typically review the laboratory's quality management system, procedures, documentation, and other relevant aspects to identify any gaps.

The key objectives of a pre-assessment may include:

1. Identifying areas of non-compliance: Assessors review the laboratory's systems and processes to identify any discrepancies or non-conformities with the accreditation standards.
2. Providing feedback: The laboratory receives critical assessment on areas that may require improvement to meet accreditation requirements.
3. Enhancing readiness: The pre-assessment helps the laboratory become better prepared for the formal accreditation assessment by addressing issues in advance.
4. It's important to note that a pre-assessment is not a mandatory step in the accreditation process, but it can be highly beneficial for laboratories seeking accreditation. Laboratories may choose to undergo a preassessment voluntarily to increase their chances of a successful accreditation outcome and to demonstrate their commitment to quality and compliance with accreditation standards.

For more information about having IAS perform a preassessment of your laboratory, email elap@iasonline.org.



Meet a few IAS Team Members

We would like to introduce you to Harry Makam and Duncan Millar, a few of our IAS team members who work with ELAP program from our office in Brea. You may talk to them on phone, run into them at local industry events or possibly during a visit to your lab.



Harry Makam

Harry Makam serves as the Principal Program Officer at IAS. In addition to working on the ELAP program, he is an EPA Microbiology Lab Certification Officer and has performed numerous assessments in accordance with the ISO/IEC 17025 standard. Harry has his BS in Forensic Science from the University of Nebraska - Lincoln. In his leisure time, Harry enjoys travel and playing volleyball, tennis and badminton. Harry is also a certified open water scuba diver.



Duncan Millar

Duncan Millar is the Business Development Manager for the ELAP and TNI programs at IAS. Duncan has led IAS efforts in working with laboratories transitioning to the TNI-2 standard for the State of California ELAP program. He has degrees from the University of California, San Diego and the University of Glasgow, Scotland. Duncan coaches youth sports and plays masters water polo.



Join the **ELAP List**

Get the latest information about accreditation practices, standards, training courses and more, when you join the IAS list for ELAP. To join, [click here](#).



Front Line Help

The following individuals are available to answer your ELAP questions.

- Application/Renewals: **Duncan Millar**, dmillar@iasonline.org
- Application/Renewals: **Allison Ames**, aames@iasonline.org
- Certificates of Insurance: **Laura Uraine**, luraine@iasonline.org
- Invoices: **Jaime Lee Karim**, jlkarim@iasonline.org
- Assessment Scheduling: **Harry Makam**, hmakam@iasonline.org
- Assessment Packages: **Emily Pao**, epao@iasonline.org



Stay in Touch

We are interested in hearing from you. Share with us what you think about this edition of our newsletter, what you would like covered in future editions and your thoughts about our assessment and accreditation services. Feel free to email iasinfo@iasonline.org.

About IAS

The International Accreditation Service (IAS) is a nonprofit accreditation body and a signatory member of Asia Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (APAC), International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC). IAS is a member of the ICC Family of Solution.

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