



Standards Council of Canada
Conseil canadien des normes

Subject: References to Laboratory Accreditation in Requests for Proposal / Bids

Date: 2012-10-17

To: All Authors of RFPs Specifying Laboratory Accreditation

It has come to our attention that a number of Requests For Proposal (RFPs) issued by Canadian governments (federal, provincial, etc.) and private sector specifiers state that "...the bidder and all subcontractors are required to secure accreditation from a specific organization...". In many of these cases only a single accrediting body is specifically named in the RFP.

With this joint public notice we wish to draw your attention to the fact that there are two Canadian based accrediting bodies, the Canadian Association for Laboratory Accreditation Inc. (CALA) and the Standards Council of Canada (SCC). Both of these accrediting bodies are recognized by the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) as equally competent accreditors of testing and/or calibration laboratories. In fact, worldwide, there are 68 signatories to the ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA)—an agreement which requires that accreditors of laboratories undergo stringent and regular peer evaluations of their operations based on the internationally recognized criteria and procedures outlined in ISO/IEC 17011.

In our opinion, the stipulations included in these RFPs are unnecessarily limiting and inconsistent. CALA and SCC have been informing the proper authorities that these RFP's should be amended to more consistently define an accredited laboratory as one whose accreditation has been obtained from an accrediting body that is signatory to the ILAC MRA, using the internationally recognized criteria and procedures outlined in ISO/IEC 17025: (General requirements for Competence of Calibration and Testing Laboratories).

About the Canadian Association for Laboratory Accreditation Inc. (CALA)

The Canadian Association for Laboratory Accreditation Inc. (CALA) is a not-for-profit Canadian laboratory accreditation body. It is known for responsive and efficient quality assurance services. Its members participate in rigorous programs of inter-lab comparisons and on-site assessments based on international standards, and benefit from both workshop and web-based training opportunities. www.cala.ca

About the Standards Council of Canada (SCC)

The Standards Council of Canada is a federal Crown corporation. Its mandate is to promote efficient and effective standardization in Canada. Located in Ottawa, SCC has a 15-member governing Council and a staff of approximately 83. The organization reports to Parliament through the Minister of Industry and oversees Canada's national network of standardization expertise. The SCC offers accreditation services to both standards development bodies, and conformity assessment organizations. In the area of conformity assessment, it provides services to over 400 clients. www.scc.ca



C. Charles Brimley
Canadian Association for Laboratory
Accreditation
Chief Executive Officer
613 233 5300 ext 223
cbrimley@cala.ca



Chantal Guay, ing. P. Eng.
Standards Council of Canada
Vice-President, Accreditation Services
613 238 3222 ext. 432
cguay@scc.ca