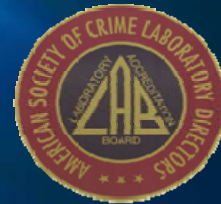


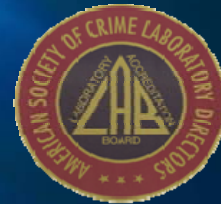
## Addressing Certain NAS Recommendations with Existing Accreditation Requirements

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Anaheim, California



- Thirteen (13) specific NAS recommendations
- Examining only two (2) recommendations today
  1. Accreditation to ISO standards
  2. Removing labs from law enforcement / prosecutor control and avoiding undue influences that may impact quality

## Accreditation to ISO Standards



### NAS Recommendation

- Use ISO/IEC 17025 as the basis for crime laboratory accreditation

### Why ? . . .

- Because it is a *comprehensive, internationally accepted* set of standards for the operation of a laboratory

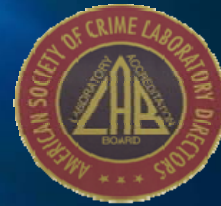
## The greatest fear of ISO/IEC 17025

- ISO/IEC 17025 was not written for crime laboratories
- ISO/IEC 17025 will not address unique crime laboratory needs

## The greatest strength of ISO/IEC 17025

- ISO/IEC 17025 was not written for crime laboratories  
*Effectively addresses the need to ensure that crime lab accreditation standards represent the views of all interested parties*
- ISO/IEC 17025 does address the needs of crime labs – because the quality needs of crime labs are not unique

## Removing labs from law enforcement/prosecutor control & undue influences on quality



### NAS Recommendation

- Remove all public forensic laboratories and facilities from the administrative control of law enforcement agencies or prosecutor's offices

### Why? . . .

- The potential for undue influence by the "parent agency"

## Parent Agency & Undue Influences

- 17025 contains accreditation requirements which are directly applicable to this recommendation
- 17025 addresses the autonomy of crime laboratories on three (3) levels:
  1. Parent agency relationships
  2. Authority of laboratory director
  3. Undue influence on all lab personnel

## Parent Agency Influences (4.1.4)

- If the laboratory is part of a parent agency the responsibilities of key personnel in the parent agency that have an involvement or influence on the testing and/or calibration activities of the laboratory shall be defined in order to identify potential conflicts of interest.

Defined = documented

### Parent Agency Influences (4.1.5 a)

- The laboratory shall have managerial and technical personnel who, irrespective of other responsibilities, have the authority and resources needed to carry out their duties

### Undue Influences (4.1.5 b)

- The laboratory shall have arrangements to ensure that its management and personnel are free from any undue internal and external commercial, financial and other pressures and influences that may adversely affect the quality of their work

## Parent Agency Influences (4.1.5 d & e)

- have policies and procedures to avoid involvement in any activities that would diminish confidence in its competence, impartiality, judgment or operational integrity;
- define the organization and management structure of the laboratory, its place in any parent organization, and the relationships between quality management, technical operations and support services;

## A Few Examples of Avoiding Inappropriate Parent Agency Influences

- **Autonomy** - Making it clear, in writing, how interactions with the lab may occur
- **Impartiality/Objectivity** – Enforcing a written prohibition against attempting to influence the outcome of testing
- **Financial** - Clarifying the importance of purchasing the critical supplies, consumables, and services specified by the laboratory

## Parent Agency & Undue Influences

- Labs can exist within a parent agency as long as an appropriate relationship is in place and maintained
- Conformance with ISO/IEC 17025:2005 requires a laboratory to demonstrate, with objective evidence, that an appropriate relationship is in place and maintained

## Overall Conclusions & Comments

- Existing ISO/IEC 17025:2005 accreditation requirements directly address some NAS recommendations – more than we have examined today
- A three-pronged approach will allow existing accreditation requirements to be effectively used to address the NAS recommendations

### Three-pronged approach

- Provide training opportunities to ensure laboratory, parent agency, and all interested parties understand of the requirements
- Expect and require laboratory top management (and top management of parent agencies) to make a genuine commitment to working in accordance with these requirements
- Apply and enforce the requirements during assessments – consistently and rigorously

A commitment to this three-pronged approach will continue to strengthen forensic science ...

through the proper interpretation and application of existing ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation standards

## Contact Information

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