

August 26, 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR       State Directors  
                                  State Metrologists (including GIPSA/USDA)

From:           Georgia L. Harris  
                  Weights & Measures Division  
                  Laboratory Metrology Group Leader

Subject:        **Annual Submission for 2005 NIST Laboratory Recognition**

In order to maintain NIST/OWM Recognition for your laboratory, you need to submit materials each year between October 1 and November 15. Please submit your material in time for an adequate WMD review. Review the attached Table 1 for a checklist of what is to be submitted each year. Materials that are not submitted on time may not be reviewed prior to the expiration of your current Recognition certificate; we will make no commitments of timely reviews for late submissions. WMD has requested the same core information each year since NIST Handbook 143 was updated in 1996. Detailed descriptions of this information can be found in NIST Handbook 143, Program Handbook, 2003 edition, (available on line: <http://www.nist.gov/labmetrology>, State Laboratory Program.) Blank forms for your submission are attached and can be downloaded in Word format from the site listed above.

**Specific Request for 2004 – Evidence of Measurement Assurance**

Detailed information is being requested this year related to your conformance to the Program Handbook in the areas of **Measurement Assurance (5.9)** to support **Uncertainty Analyses (5.6)** and accurate measurements. We spent extra time at the Regional Measurement Assurance Program training last year addressing control charting and measurement assurance concepts. Please submit copies of all control charts for each measurement area in which you are requesting Recognition. *The charts may be submitted on paper. If either Excel or PMAP software was used, the files may be submitted electronically via floppy disk/zip disk/CD-R/CD-RW. Please do NOT send via email to avoid incompatibilities, firewall issues, the number of possible files with similar names, and our server/storage/filing concerns.* If you do not have control charts for a measurement area in which a limited number of measurements are made each year, provide a detailed description of how you meet the requirements of section 5.9 in Handbook 143. Please use the “Checklist for Control Chart Review” available at <http://www.nist.gov/labmetrology> to be sure that your charts comply with expectations.

In addition, to further evaluate measurement assurance and compliance to the WMD policy, please submit copies of “Laboratory Follow Up and Corrective Action Checklist” forms for all round robins you participated in during 2003 and 2004. Forms are available on the NIST website: <http://ts.nist.gov/ts/htdocs/230/235/roundrobin/roundrobins.htm>. We also expect that if corrective action is appropriate that it has been completed or is in progress by the time your submission is sent in.

### **ISO/IEC 17025 Update Process and Checklist**

As we indicated in the 2001 to 2003 memoranda regarding the 2002 to 2004 Recognition cycles, NIST Handbook 143 was to be updated during 2002. It was published in March 2003. The handbook was announced in 29003 and mailed to all laboratory directors and metrologists. Additional copies were mailed earlier this year. You began completing and submitting the new 17025 checklist last year instead of Appendix C, Part 2. The *new* checklist is now required. You can find the checklist on the WMD web site at: <http://www.nist.gov/labmetrology>, Technical Resources, Quality Systems or on the NVLAP web site (link from labmetrology page to assessor resources, or available at: <http://ts.nist.gov/ts/htdocs/210/214/assessors/assessor.htm>). *Appendix C must be submitted along with evidence of your latest Management Review. It must include a Technical Audit.*

Please note progress made on the deficiencies and action items from the management review submitted for 2004.

WMD will be evaluating the ongoing *effectiveness* of the internal audit (completeness of the checklist and identification of deficiencies) and the management review (awareness of deficiencies, prioritization of corrective action, as well as any corrective action that may be planned or completed). Identification of non-compliance to the criteria and subsequent corrective action will be viewed by WMD as a positive opportunity for improved laboratory operations and quality of measurements.

**Quality Manuals need to be updated by the 2004 Recognition cycle to comply with the new criteria.** Only submit quality manuals at this time if they have been updated. NIST/WMD will notify you during our annual review if we don't have a quality manual on file that complies with the updated Handbook. We have extended your final due date for updating quality manuals until this review cycle (October 1 to November 15, 2004); it won't be extended again and there will not be a grace period. Please send uncontrolled copies of your quality manual to our office. *The quality manuals must comply with the CURRENT version of NIST Handbook 143!*