

# Overview of Accreditation in the United States

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# Topics

- Background on Laboratory Accreditation
- Government Involvement
- Accreditation Systems of Other Types of Conformity Assessment Bodies

# Background

- Sector-specific lab accreditation programs go back 60+ years
- National lab accreditation programs started in the 1970's
- NIST has identified:
  - Over 30 federal government programs
  - Over 50 state and local government programs
  - Over 20 professional/trade association programs
- Estimated to be over 150 lab accreditation programs

# Sector-specific Programs

- Government (all levels)
  - environmental
  - medical
  - food safety
  - animal health
  - calibration
  - firearms
  - manure
  - etc.
- Private-sector
  - automotive
  - building materials
  - environmental
  - medical
  - forensic science
  - industrial hygiene
  - steel construction
  - solar equipment
  - safety equipment
  - kitchen cabinets

# Government Programs

- Serve specific regulatory needs for health, safety, and environmental issues
- Some agencies recognize accreditation by others (NRC, DOD, DOE, DOJ, FCC, EPA)
- Some agencies are considering how accreditation can be used to support their programs (USDA, FDA)

# Government Acronyms Used

DOD – Department of Defense

DOE – Department of Energy

DOJ – Department of Justice

EPA – Environmental Protection Agency

FCC – Federal Communications Commission

FDA – Food and Drug Administration

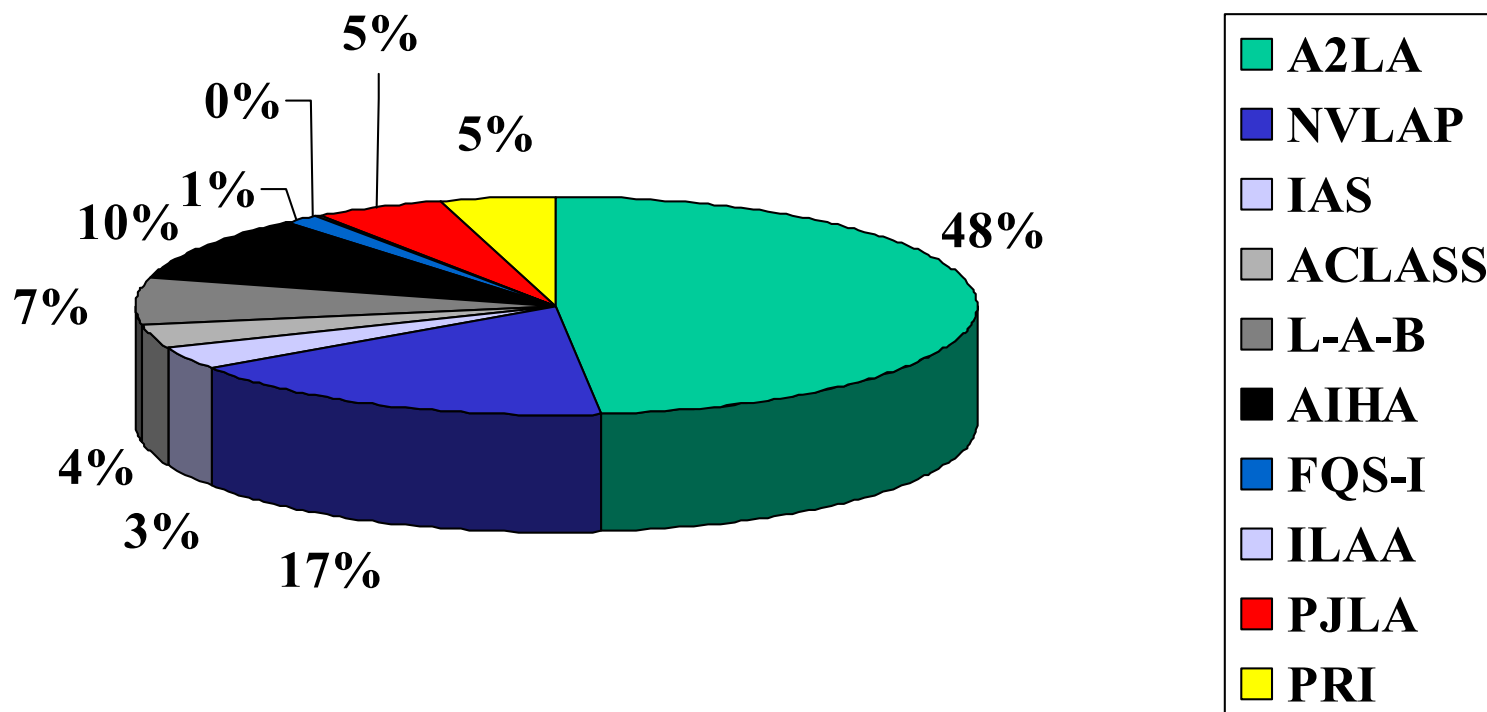
NRC – Nuclear Regulatory Commission

USDA – US Department of Agriculture

# Last 30+ Years

- National bodies intended to provide national and international recognition:
  - NVLAP, established in 1976
  - A2LA, established in 1978
  - Other bodies have emerged during the late 1990's
- Most sector-specific programs have **not** been replaced by these national bodies
- Most of these do **not** use ISO/IEC standards
- NACLA with NIST is trying to coordinate for last 10+ years

*About 4000 ISO/IEC 17025 Accreditations  
in USA  
as of February 15, 2007*





# ILAC MRA Signatories

A2LA – American Association for Laboratory Accreditation

ACLASS – Assured Calibration Laboratory Accreditation System Services

IAS – International Accreditation Services

NVLAP – National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program

# Accreditation of Product Certification Bodies

- ANSI is the leader
- IAS and A2LA have similar programs
- Standards Council of Canada also accredits US-based product certification bodies
- All operating in accordance with ISO/IEC 17011
- No national coordination yet
- Over 40 accreditations

# Accreditation of Inspection Bodies

- IAS is the leader
- A2LA has a similar program
- Both are signatories to the APLAC MRA
- No national coordination yet
- Over 60 accreditations

# Accreditation of Management System Certification Bodies

- ANAB is the sole US-based operator in the USA
- Operates in accordance with ISO/IEC 17011
- Internationally recognized in IAF and IAAC MLAs
- Over 30 accredited certification bodies for ISO 9001, 14001, and a number of industry specific requirements

# Accreditation of Personnel Certification Bodies

- NOCA is the leader
- ANSI also has a program
- Both claim to operate to ISO/IEC 17011
- About 140 accreditations

# Some Acronyms Used

- A2LA – American Association for Laboratory Accreditation
- ACCLASS – Assured Calibration Lab. Accreditation System Services
- AIHA – American Industrial Hygiene Association
- ANAB – ANSI/ASQ National Accreditation Board
- APLAC – Asia-Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation
- ASQ – American Society for Quality
- FQS-I – Forensic Quality Services International
- IAF – International Accreditation Forum
- IAS – International Accreditation Services
- ILAA – International Laboratory Assessment and Accreditation
- ILAC – International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation
- L-A-B – Laboratory Accreditation Bureau
- NOCA – National Organization for Competency Assurance
- NVLAP – National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program
- PRI – Performance Review Institute

# For More Information

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