Purpose

This AASHTO Accreditation Program (AAP) Policy and Guidance document is intended to describe the process by which laboratory accreditation is able to be maintained following laboratory relocation.

Terminology

1. *Relocation* – the process whereby a laboratory moves its testing operations from one address to another address.

1.1. Mobile or project laboratories are considered to have relocated when they are moved to a new site.

Policy

This policy and guidance document expands upon the requirements in Section 3.4.7 and 16.3 of the Procedures Manual for the Accreditation of Construction Materials Testing Laboratories and AASHTO R 18. Please see those documents for the exact wording of the requirements.

Procedure

1. When a laboratory relocates to a new facility, the laboratory must notify the AASHTO Accreditation Program (AAP) and any providers of assessment and proficiency sample services.
2. The AAP will issue an accreditation decision that instructs the laboratory to submit evidence regarding the continued adherence to AAP requirements for the standards included in the scope of their AASHTO Accreditation.
3. The laboratory shall submit all required evidence to maintain its accreditation.

3.1. The deadline for submitting evidence will be defined as 60 days from the date of the relocation.

3.2. Failure to comply with all required actions shall result in a suspension of accreditation and a possible requirement for a surveillance assessment (See Section 5).

3.3. A Quality Analyst will review the evidence and notify the laboratory if it needs to submit additional documentation or if the issues have been resolved.

4. AASHTO re:source will update all addresses associated with the laboratory's account as soon as the laboratory moves to ensure accurate delivery of proficiency samples.

4.1. If the laboratory does not want all of their addresses to be updated, it must notify AASHTO re:source.

5. If a laboratory fails to comply with the requirements for laboratory relocation or fails to demonstrate conformance to all relevant standards following the relocation, the laboratory's accreditation shall be suspended for the appropriate standards. The entire accreditation may be suspended, or the suspension may apply to individual standards based on the situation. Below are some of the examples of how standard-specific suspensions are administered:

5.1. Failure to satisfy the requirements for standardization of balances will result in a

suspension for any standards that require the use of a balance. If nearly all the test methods require the use of a balance, the entire accreditation shall be suspended.

5.2. Failure to satisfy the requirements for standardization of compression machines shall result in a suspension for any standards that require the use of that compression machine.

5.3. Failure to satisfy the requirements for standardization of compaction equipment shall result in a suspension for the test that requires the use of that compaction equipment.

5.4. Failure to satisfy the requirements for curing facilities shall result in a suspension for C511, M201, and the appropriate dependent standards (see the AAP Policy on Curing Facilities).

6. The AAP notifies the laboratory if a surveillance assessment is required because the laboratory did not meet the lab relocation criteria expressed in this policy.

7. Requests to transfer accreditation from one operational facility to another as a relocation will be denied.

Documentation Required to be Submitted by the Laboratory

8. The laboratory is required to submit a completed Laboratory Relocation Form and supporting documentation required by the relocation (see the form for more details on what is required to be submitted).

8.1. The AAP reserves the right to request more information if there is a concern about the laboratory maintaining its new facilities according to the requirements of the program.

8.2. If the relocation is greater than 1 hour from the initial location, the laboratory also needs to submit documentation regarding personnel qualifications.

9. If there is a case of multi-site or off-site personnel that has not previously been approved, the laboratory is required to complete and submit a copy of the Multi-Site or Off-Site Personnel Form along with all supporting documentation.

10. The laboratory is required to submit evidence that the laboratory's new facility meets the minimum test environment requirements specified in the AAP Procedures Manual and the laboratory's accredited standards such as AASHTO M201 and ASTM C511.

10.1. Evidence that the new laboratory location has an AASHTO M201 or ASTM C511-conforming curing facility, if applicable. The following items will provide evidence of this:

10.1.1. Pictures of the tanks and/or moist room that include the locations of the thermostatic control and recording thermometer(s),Submit evidence that the space surrounding the moist room is thermostatically controlled.

10.1.2. Data charts from the recording thermometer(s) for the most current three weeks.

10.1.3. If applicable, evidence of suitable interconnection and a water circulator for interconnected tanks, to include (a) pictures, and (b) records of the weekly check of temperature variation between tanks (see Nos. 1-3 of Section 7.1.1 of C511 and 7.2 of M201).

11. The laboratory is required to submit updated calibration and standardization records showing that the equipment has been calibrated and standardized at the new location.

11.1. The equipment includes, but is not limited to balances, compression machines and load cells, gyratory compactors, and any other equipment that may have its calibration status affected by a move. The Laboratory Relocation Form has a comprehensive list of equipment that will need to be calibrated and standardized after a lab relocation.

11.1.1. For balances, a 2-point verification conducted by the laboratory with calibrated masses is also acceptable, provided that the last full calibration/standardization was conducted within the last 12 months.

11.1.2. It is important for load cells that are normally shipped out to be standardized in place at the new location to ensure that the machine is operating correctly in its new position. It is possible that a laboratory could ship out the load cell and then install it only to find it is not operating correctly.

Guidance

12. The AAP has deemed a supplemental visit to be unnecessary in *most* cases when a laboratory relocates provided that the laboratory can submit evidence that it has performed certain tasks that ensure the stability of their calibrations and testing capabilities. However, a supplemental on-site visit may be required to ensure that changes in the laboratory's quality system, capability to perform tests for which it is accredited, laboratory ownership, management and technical personnel, and equipment and facilities are in conformance with AAP and relevant standard requirements.

13. Laboratory management should notify the AAP prior to the relocation to ensure that all requirements for the specific situation are understood.