AASHTO Accreditation Program (AAP) Policy and Guidance on Laboratory Relocation

Purpose

This document is intended to describe the process through which a laboratory can maintain its accreditation following a laboratory relocation.

Terminology

Relocation – the process through which a laboratory moves its operations from one address to another address.

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

References

Section 3.4.7 of the Procedures Manual for the Accreditation of Construction Materials Testing Laboratories:

> *If a laboratory relocates to an address that differs from the location where the most recent AASHTO re:source or CCRL on-site assessment took place, the laboratory must inform AASHTO re:source in writing prior to the move date. The AAP will then notify the laboratory that they must submit a completed Laboratory Relocation Form along with all required supporting documentation. This documentation must be submitted within 60 days of the laboratory relocation. Once the information is reviewed, a decision will be made about whether a surveillance on-site assessment is required to verify ongoing technical competence.*

Section 6.2.1.3 of AASHTO R 18: Standard Recommended Practice for Establishing and Implementing a Quality System for Construction Materials Testing Laboratories:

> *Equipment and measurement standards that may be affected by moving them to a new location or environment shall be calibrated, standardized, or checked before being placed in service. Examples of equipment that may be affected by a move include, but are not limited to, balances, compression machines, sensitive mechanical compaction equipment, and sensitive measurement equipment.*

Policy

1. It is the responsibility of the laboratory to notify the AASHTO Accreditation Program (AAP) and any assessment and proficiency sample service providers prior to relocating to a new facility/address.
2. Upon notification of the relocation, AASHTO re:source will update all relevant addresses associated with the laboratory's account on their AASHTO re:source home page as soon as the laboratory moves to ensure accurate delivery of proficiency samples. If the laboratory does not want all of their addresses to be updated, it is the responsibility of the lab to indicate which addresses to update on the Laboratory Relocation Form.
3. An accreditation event will be created by the AAP, which will generate a notification that instructs the laboratory to submit evidence regarding the relocation to ensure continued conformance to accreditation requirements.

4. The deadline for submitting evidence is defined as 60 days from the date of the relocation.
5. The assigned state Quality Analyst or designee will review the evidence and notify the laboratory if additional documentation is needed or if everything is resolved.
6. Failure to comply with the requirements for laboratory relocation will result in a suspension of accreditation. 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:
    6.1. 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.
    6.2. 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 and the AAP Policy and Guidance on Prerequisites for Accreditation).
7. In *most* cases, the AAP has deemed a surveillance visit to be unnecessary when a laboratory relocates provided that the laboratory submits the required documentation and evidence that it has performed certain tasks which ensure the stability of their calibrations and testing capabilities.
    7.1. In the event it is determined that the relocation has called into question the capability to perform tests for which it is accredited, and/or laboratory ownership, location, management and technical personnel changes, and that equipment and facilities may not be in conformance with AAP and relevant standard requirements, a surveillance on-site visit may be required to resolve the issues. The laboratory will be notified if this situation arises and will be provided with instructions for the next steps.
8. The AAP reserves the right to request more information if there are concerns about the laboratory maintaining its new facilities according to the requirements of the program.

Documentation Required to be Submitted by the Laboratory

1. Completed Laboratory Relocation Form.
    1.1. Completed Change in Personnel and a Multi-Site or Off-Site Personnel Form (if applicable) along with all supporting documentation if the relocation caused a change in management or organization.
2. The supporting documentation required as indicated in **Annex 1** at the end of this document.
    2.1. In some cases, photographs or video evidence will need to be submitted. Photographs and video should be clear/not blurry and provide enough context for the area or situation.
        2.1.1. Example 1) Photographs to demonstrate facility controls such as thermostats, air vents, etc. should not be one single photo zoomed in on the thermostat showing the temperature is between 60-85°F. Several photographs may need to be

submitted to demonstrate an HVAC system, entrances and exits, where the thermostat is in relation to the rest of the testing areas

2.1.2. Example 2) Evidence that the new laboratory location has an AASHTO M201 or ASTM C511-conforming curing facility. The following items will provide evidence of this:

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

Annex 1

(Mandatory information)

The following lists specify the required supporting documentation that will be requested based on the laboratory's scope of accreditation. The requests for documentation will be loaded as "nonconformities" into the accreditation event being used to address the relocation of the laboratory.

The laboratory will be able to submit its supporting evidence to these "nonconformities" in the same manner as for assessment final report nonconformities. Additional information may be requested by the Quality Analyst depending on the review of the supporting evidence.

General Facility Requirements:

1. Submit a completed Laboratory Relocation Form and any additional forms such as Change in Personnel or Multi-Site/Off-Site Personnel Form and supporting documentation.
2. Submit photographs of the interior and exterior of the laboratory. Interior photographs should show there is adequate space for testing, lighting throughout, and an adequate power supply. Exterior photograph(s) should show the laboratory is on a level and stable foundation and that testing can be performed without undue negative external influences.
3. Submit photographs or videos to show that the laboratory has an adequate supply of water appropriate for the laboratory's scope of testing, for tests such as AASHTO T 11 / ASTM C117 and AASHTO T 30 / ASTM D5444.
4. Submit a video of a working fume hood that exhausts fumes to the outside of the building or of an effective surface exhaust system in a well-ventilated area. The video shall demonstrate the operation of the fan in the hood and that the exhaust line runs to the outside of the building, or the effectiveness of the surface exhaust system being used in a well-ventilated area. This applies to the following methods: AASHTO T113 / ASTM C123; AASHTO T164 / ASTM D2172; ASTM D5404; ASTM D7906; AASHTO T231/ ASTM C617; ASTM C1552; and ASTM D1632.
5. Submit records for Compression, Loading, and Tensile testing machines in use which require calibration according to E4. This applies to the following test methods: ASTM D3967, ASTM D5607, ASTM D7012, Iron and Steel Tensile machines, AASHTO T106/ ASTM C109, AASHTO T22/ ASTM C39, AASHTO T97/ ASTM C78, AASHTO T177/ ASTM C293, ASTM C67, ASTM C140, ASTM C780 (Annex 6), ASTM C1019, C1314, etc.

Cement, Concrete, Masonry, and Pozzolan Curing Facility Requirements:

1. AASHTO M 201 / ASTM C511: Documentation for the curing facilities (moist room and/or water tanks) will need to be submitted as outlined below. If the laboratory is accredited for standards such as ASTM C780 (Annex 6) and ASTM C1260, evidence for a moist room or moist cabinet is required. If the laboratory is accredited for standards AASHTO T 160 / ASTM C157 or ASTM C1038, evidence for both (1) a moist room or moist cabinet and (2) water storage tanks is required. For more information on which tests require which type of curing facility, see the AASHTO Accreditation Policy on Curing Facilities.

   1.1. Photographs of the following items, as applicable:

      1.1.1. For water tanks: Submit photographs of the water tanks. If utilizing interconnected water tanks, showing the interconnections, direction of the flow of water, and water pumps.

      1.1.2. For moist rooms: Submit photographs of the inside of the moist room to show the locations of misters, misters while in operation, any shelving, and the surface condition and location of specimens. Photographs of the area surrounding the moist room must show all four sides.

      1.1.3. Submit photographs of the thermostatic control for heating and cooling including the positioning of the sensors for the thermostats in relation to the moist room or area surrounding the room or tanks. Photographs of the temperature recorders must include the positioning of the probes.

   1.2. Recorder data and weekly reviews:

      1.2.1. Submit the three most current weeks of evaluated temperature recorder data for each recorder being used.

      1.2.2. For interconnected tanks, submit records of the three most current weeks of the weekly check of temperature variation between tanks.

      1.2.3. Submit current standardization records for the temperature recorders to show that they have been standardized in the new curing facilities during normal operation.

   1.3. For Cement Testing facilities:

      1.3.1. AASHTO M 201 / ASTM C511 (AASHTO T 106 / ASTM C109): Submit evidence that the following temperature and humidity requirements are being met for cement mixing rooms: "The temperature of the air in the vicinity of the mixing slab, molds, and base plates shall be maintained at 23.0 ± 4.0 °C (AASHTO T 106 / ASTM C109: 73.5 ± 5.5 °F or [23.0 ± 3.0 °C]) and at a relative humidity of not less than 50 %."

Soil Conditioning Facility Requirements:

1. AASHTO T 135 / ASTM D559 and AASHTO T 136 / ASTM D560: Submit evidence that the laboratory has a moist room or container: Section 3.4 of AASHTO T 135 and 3.5 of AASHTO T 136: "A moist room or suitable covered container capable of maintaining a temperature of 21 ± 1.7°C (70 ± 3°F) and a relative humidity of 100 percent for seven-day storage of compacted specimens" (Cf. Section 5.4 of ASTM D559, which gives a tolerance of 21 ± 2°C (70 ± 3°F) and Section 5.5 of ASTM D560 which gives a tolerance of 23 ± 2°C [73.5 ± 3.5°F]).