



Questions from the Webinar:

Preparing for an AASHTO re:source Remote Assessment

During the December 2020 webinar, [Preparing for an AASHTO re:source Remote Assessment](#), we did not have enough time to ask and answer all attendee questions live. Below are the unasked questions, and their answers.

More information on remote assessment can be found at: <http://aashtoresource.org/lap/remote-assessments>

QUESTION	ANSWER
What do we do if the equipment was calibrated by an outside company?	We only require demonstration of equipment checks for equipment that you calibrate, standardize, or check internally.
How are you handling equipment that cannot be calibrated due to problems with Covid? I.e. the company is not sending techs to our state.	<p>Below are a few scenarios related to calibration provider delays and the ramifications for the AASHTO re:source assessment report and AASHTO Accreditation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The equipment calibration was overdue at the time of the assessment:</i> The AASHTO re:source report will include a nonconformity that will be tracked by the AASHTO Accreditation Program (AAP). The AAP will be lenient about the deadline in these cases in line with the calibration provider’s availability. • <i>The equipment calibration was completed before the assessment, but the interval was greater than is permitted in the standards:</i> An Observation will be reported. No corrective action report will be required. • <i>The laboratory had never had its equipment calibrated and is requesting accreditation for the first time:</i> Accreditation will not be granted in these cases until the proper calibrations have been carried out.
If the accredited lab brings online additional test methods never previously accredited, do they still need to have an onsite assessment within one year?	No, this requirement is only for new laboratories that we have never visited on-site before.
When you say upload all document, we have 5 to 10 years of equipment calibration paper work. Do we need to upload those too?	We need to see records created since the date of your last assessment. If this is your first assessment, we need to see two years of records or for the entire existence of the laboratory if the laboratory has existed for less than two years.

<p>An AAP document i have says a Refreance Thermometers for calibrating Ovens, RV and BBR needs to be calibrated every 36 months? Is this Correct?</p>	<p>Policies on thermometers can be found in this AAAP Policy and Guidance Document. As stated in Section 5.2 of this document, reference thermometers must be calibrated every 3 years or as required by the test method or specification in which it is used, whichever interval is smaller. Please note that there are test standards that require more frequent calibration of the reference thermometer used. In these cases, the more frequent requirement must be followed.</p>
<p>I know CDI (corrected during inspection) has been removed. However, if it can be fixed because it's minor will it be allowed?</p>	<p>We will be following the Policy on Resolving Findings During the Assessment in all situations.</p>
<p>For a new lab, is there an additional cost when you have to do the onsite audit?</p>	<p>The on-site assessment that is required in one year for new laboratories will be an abbreviated assessment. The length of the assessment will depend upon the scope of accreditation and the findings found during the remote assessment. The abbreviated assessment will only include a sampling of items covered during the remote assessment. Fees for on-site assessments can be found on our Tests and Fees Page.</p>
<p>Is it a 2 hour window for each procedure required or you can go right into the next procedure after finishing one?</p>	<p>The assessment will take place in two-hour blocks. The assessor will work with you to create an agenda that includes an appropriate number of tests that can be covered in two hours. We do not designate one 2-hour block for each test. Typically, several tests are designated for each two-hour block, but it depends on the complexity of the testing being performed and the preparedness of the laboratory.</p>
<p>Do we need to perform asphalt calibrations?</p>	<p>You must conform to the calibration, standardization, and check requirements of AASHTO R 18</p>
<p>You mentioned you will be watching us do the verification of the equipment. what happens if we perform the verification and make an error? Will that then become a non conformity</p>	<p>Yes, in some cases, if it is clear that technicians do not know how to perform the equipment checks, however records exist with that technicians name on them... this will certainly be an issue, as it is an indication that 1) the technician was not properly trained to do the work, or 2) the work was not actually done. Minor errors that are clearly just mistakes made by a nervous technician do not fall into this category.</p>
<p>Can the data be uploaded before the 6 week period if you have what will be needed at the time of assessment.</p>	<p>You can upload the required documentation any time after you have submitted your assessment request.</p>
<p>What if a scheduled experiment for the assessment is not one that is currently performed within the laboratory? (ex. Solubility of Bitumous Material)</p>	<p>The agenda will only include tests that are part of the scope of your assessment. The agenda is custom-made for you, with your help, during the assessment dry run. The example shown during the webinar was only one example for one particular lab. We understand that your laboratory likely performs a different set of tests.</p>

With remote assessments are we going to have a chance to fix any issues onsite or do we have to wait till the final report is submitted?	We recently changed our policies on resolving findings during assessments. That policy can be found here .
Is calibration equipment needed for equipment used in a test, included in the sample preparation instructions now that it sounds like calibration activity is part of the assessment rather than proof of records and random check by an onsite assessor.	If you calibrate, standardize, or check equipment in-house rather than using an outside agency, you are expected to be able to present the reference equipment used during the assessment. This is not a change and has always been the case for remote assessments as well as on-site assessments.
If I uploaded my Quality Manual back in July but won't be having an Assessment until next year will I have to upload another updated version?	Yes, it is recommended that once the assessment is scheduled that you let the assessor know that you have an updated version.
Why are we checking how we perform calibrations this time? This wasn't done before. Only the records were requested.	We are unable to check equipment with our assessment kits during a remote assessment. This is an alternative to the assessor checking the equipment. It adds an extra benefit in allowing us to ensure that your technicians actually know how to perform the equipment checks properly.
When/how should a lab remove a test accreditation.	You can contact your Quality Analyst anytime to have a test method withdrawn from the scope of your accreditation. If you would like to add or remove one or two tests from your assessment request, just let your assessor know. We can add or remove a few tests on the fly pretty easily. If you need to add or remove many tests from the scope of the assessment, it is important that you let us know as soon as possible, as this impacts scheduling for your assessment.
There is not a "due by" date on our pre-assessment. How do I know there is a deadline to upload documents?	The deadline for uploading documents will be specified in your assessment agenda. Earlier is better. You can submit them before your assessment is even scheduled.
So if I've received my assessment request does that mean that an assessment will be scheduled within 4 - 6 months?	If you received an email from us indicating that it is time to request an assessment, make sure that you go to our website and complete the request form by the due date indicated in the email. You can expect the assessment to be scheduled 1-3 months after the due date.
In the QSM documentation should we include current ASTM Standards?	No, you do not need to submit copies of AASHTO or ASTM standards. The assessor will ask to see these during the assessment.