



Proficiency Test Provider (PTP) Accreditation Procedure

PJLA offers third-party accreditation services to Conformity Assessment Bodies (i.e. Testing and/or Calibration Laboratories, Reference Material Producers, Field Sampling and Measurement Organizations, Inspection Bodies, and Proficiency Test Providers (PTPs). This procedure outlines PJLA's accreditation process and criteria administered to conformity assessments bodies that are proficiency testing providers to ISO/IEC 17043:2010. **This is a Supplemental Procedure to PJLA's Accreditation Procedure (SOP-1). Both procedures shall be followed for the entirety of this accreditation program.**



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1.0 SUBSTANCE OF THE AGREEMENT

- 1.1 PJLA is recognized by the ILAC and APAC as operating to ISO/IEC 17011:2017

2.0 MANUAL/ORGANIZATION

- 2.1 PJLA maintains a quality manual and operating procedures and work instructions to document its quality system to comply with ISO/IEC 17011:2017. These and other related documents state all of the requirements for organizations seeking accreditation under the PTP program. PJLA will follow its organization procedures as specified in these documents in the removal, suspension or withdrawal of an organization's accreditation status based on the organization's failure to meet requirements of the program on an ongoing basis or at the organization's request.

3.0 TRAINING AND QUALIFICATION

- 3.1 PJLA maintains a training, qualification and on-going continuing education program for assessors based on the requirements outlined in ISO/IEC 17043:2010 and ISO/IEC 17011:2017. New and experienced assessors are required to meet the requirements contained in this document. PJLA may utilize the training of other accrediting organizations. However, those accrediting organizations must also be recognized under the ILAC PTP MRA. PJLA will also recognize appropriate training conducted by federal, state, or local entities, academic/educational institutions or qualified private organizations if available and equivalent (i.e. The NELAC Institute PT program in the United States).
- 3.2 PTP assessors will possess a Bachelor's degree (or higher) in a scientific/technical discipline or have equivalent experience in testing and/or calibration, production/quality control, statistics, PT/ILC programs, and their planning and execution. Initially, assessors in the beginning of the program will not have to be witnessed or supervised if they have completed at least four other on-site assessments and have been determined to be proficient by PJLA. To be qualified all assessors will have to participate in at least four on-site assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor. If the assessor is already a qualified assessor for another PJLA program, then the assessor will only need to be witnessed or supervised for one on-site assessment, at a minimum. Any supervised assessment shall be documented on an Assessor Evaluation Form (LF-100).
- 3.3 All assessors shall complete a basic training course that addresses the requirements or guidance of ISO/IEC 17043:2010(2015), ISO 13528:2015, and successor documents and pass a written test. They shall also complete or have



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on record completion of at least one technical discipline as described in the previous paragraph. Annual refresher training will be provided to address (for example): PTP programs, PT analyses and presentation, regulations/program requirements, accreditation processes and procedures and requirements, records and documents, data reduction and analysis, and reporting, sampling and measurement methods and techniques, and other topics to improve assessment and communication skills.

- 3.4 All qualifications and training will be documented in the assessor files.

4.0 ASSESSMENTS AND DOCUMENTATION

- 4.1 PJLA will perform on-site assessments of organizations' quality systems to include general ISO/IEC 17025:2017 as applicable and ISO/IEC 17043:2010 requirements (or successor documents). Each assessment will include the completion of a checklist that follows the requirements of the ISO 17043:2010). The completed checklist and other pertinent documentation will be kept per 8.1 below.
- 4.2 The basis for the assessment of the PTP will be ISO/IEC 17043:2010. (or successor document). The applicability of ISO/IEC 17025:2017 and ISO/IEC 17043:2010 requirements, depending on the functions and activities the PTP performs. When the PTP performs measurement, calibration and testing activities, the requirements of ISO/IEC 17025 would apply. If the PTP (or a subcontractor) is accredited under the APAC and/or ILAC MRA for the activities performed, this will be sufficient evidence of technical competency. If the PTP is not accredited for such activities where the requirements of ISO/IEC 17025:2017 would apply, PJLA will include the assessment for these activities against the requirements of ISO/IEC 17025:2017 as well as those contained in ISO/IEC 17043:2010 (or successor document).
- 4.3 For guidance regarding PTP, subcontractor roles and the applicability of ISO/IEC 17025:2017, ISO/IEC 17043:2010(2015) (or successor document).

5.0 PROFICIENCY TESTING (ACCREDITATION PROCESS)

- 5.1 PJLA requires all Conformity Assessment Bodies, (CABs), applying or maintaining accreditation under its testing and calibration programs to participate in applicable and available proficiency testing (PT) programs from an approved or recognized (PT) provider to each scope of accreditation sought. This (PT) program must comply with PJLA Policy PL-1 and other related program specific requirements such as ILAC P9:06/14 for the tests or calibrations performed. This requirement also extends to CAB subcontractors performing certain function in



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their PTP activities. This requirement holds true whether the subcontractor is accredited or unaccredited. If appropriate PT programs are not applicable or available then proficiency can be demonstrated by a variety of means such as (but not limited to): internal quality control check samples or programs; studies to establish method detection limits, precision, accuracy, and demonstrations of capability; internal self-monitoring and audits of the measurement activities; or inter-organization studies.

6.0 ACCREDITATION INTERVAL/CYCLE (ASSESSMENT PROCESS)

6.1 PJLA currently accredits CABs for a two-year accreditation cycle, supplemented with yearly on-site surveillance assessments. While no change in this interval is anticipated, for the PJLA PTP program, it will not exceed the times and conditions allowed in ISO/IEC 17011:2017. Accreditation and re-accreditation assessments involve the off-site review of documentation and performance information and an on-site assessment that address all elements of ISO/IEC 17043:2010) and the ILAC and APAC PTP specific requirements as applicable. This includes subcontractor locations where warranted.

7.0 ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS AND REPORT

7.1 PJLA will follow its documented procedures in the conduct of the assessments, documentation of findings (non-conformities/observations), and on-site reports. PJLA assessors are expected to leave the documentation of findings and the report with the organization at the conclusion of the closing meeting. Also, the lead assessor is expected to send this documentation to PJLA HQ within 14 days of the end of the assessment (with allowances for travel, weekends, particular circumstances, etc.). Consistent with current PJLA requirements all non-conformities must be closed or resolved with correction and containment, root cause, implementation of corrective action, and objective evidence or an assessable plan with objective evidence of implementation of the plan within 60 days of the closing meeting. All non-conformities must be so resolved prior to recommending accreditation or extending reaccreditation.

8.0 RECORD RETENTION (RECORDS/COMPLAINTS)

8.1 PJLA currently retains records from three (3) to five (5) years (depending on the record), minimum. These records will include all complaints received from customers and others about CABs accredited by PJLA in the ILAC and APAC PTP programs. Specific program requirements may supersede these retention periods, but only by increasing them.



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9.0 DELEGATION (SUBCONTRACTING OF ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES)

- 9.1 PJLA will not delegate (whole or in part) the responsibility of CAB assessment to another organization, which is not itself recognized under the ILAC and APAC PTP programs. This will not extend to the assessors themselves, many/most of who are independent contractors. PJLA confidentiality and conflict of interest policies will be enforced.

10.0 SUBCONTRACTING OF CAB ACTIVITIES

- 10.1 CABs accredited by PJLA under the ILAC and APAC programs may subcontract activities described under the scopes of their accreditation and for which they are recognized consistent with ISO/IEC 17043:2010. They shall not subcontract planning of the proficiency test schemes, the evaluation of performance or the authorization of the final report. Other provisions of ISO/IEC 17043:2010 regarding subcontracting will, of course, also be enforced in that the PTP would need to determine the competence of the subcontractor for the work performed and have records of the qualifications and evaluation of the subcontractor(s). PJLA will review how the PTP selects subcontractors and qualifies them for specific activities in ISO/IEC 17043:2010 and other appropriate applicable standards.
- 10.2 An on-site assessment of the subcontractor by the PTP is not normally needed if the subcontractor is accredited to ISO/IEC 17025:2017, ISO 15189:2012, ISO 9001:2015 or ISO 17034:2016 for the specific activities as required in ISO/IEC 17043:2010 section 5.5, and the degree of the review done by the PTP of the contract or arrangement with its subcontractor is appropriate.
- 10.3 When the subcontractor is not accredited, the same requirements of ISO/IEC 17043:2010 section 5.5 should be addressed, but an on-site assessment by the PTP may be required with records available for review.

11.0 CERTIFICATES OF ACCREDITATION

- 11.1 PJLA only issues certificates of accreditation upon the final approval of the Executive Committee. These certificates will contain the effective date and the scope of accreditation consistent with PJLA policies with ISO/IEC 17011:2017 section 7.8.3 e).
- 11.2 Scopes for PTPs will contain:



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- 11.2.1 company name, location, and contact information;
 - 11.2.2 schemes that the proficiency testing provider is competent to provide
 - 11.2.3 type of proficiency test items
 - 11.2.4 the measurand(s) or characteristic(s) or where appropriate the type of measurand(s) or characteristic(s) that are to be identified, measured or tested.
- 11.3 If a PTP does certain activities that are outside the scope of its accreditation, it shall not claim that it is accredited for the activities or PT schemes or tests concerned and cannot use an endorsed certificate/statement/report for such activities.
- 11.4 A listing of all accredited CABs will be published on the PJLA site to include the: CAB name, address, contact, phone number, scope of accreditation. Any changes to the CAB's status will be indicated on the PJLA website.

12.0 PARTICIPATION AND MAINTENANCE OF RECOGNITION

- 12.1 PJLA will participate in meetings with ILAC and APAC as scheduled and announced, to help in the evaluation, maintenance and improvement of the ILAC and APAC programs. PJLA will undergo periodic re-evaluations as an AB by the as required upon the granting of full recognition by ILAC. This may involve other interested parties as observers in the evaluation process.