Brazoria County Sheriff's Office - Crime Laboratory

2023 - 17025T - Scope Extension

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Data collected on 2023-12-04

ANSI National Accreditation Board

United States

Description

This assessment report summarizes the outcome of the recent accreditation activity. A separate document, the assessment plan, provides information on the type of activity (*e.g.,* reassessment, surveillance activity, scope extension), the date(s) of the activity, the assessment team members, the requirement documents and refers to the scope of the discipline(s) assessed for each location. The assessment plan, together with this report, provide a complete picture of the accreditation activity.

The ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB) evaluated the competence of the laboratory and conformance with all applicable accreditation requirements for the scope of accreditation referenced in the assessment plan. Objective evidence of implementation was assessed. The results of an assessment activity are based on a sample of records, locations, and personnel that were available at the time of the activity. Witnessing is an additional technique used in most activities.

REQUIREMENTS:

ISO/IEC 17025:2017 General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories & ANAB Accreditation Requirements for Forensic Testing and Calibration (AR 3125) evaluated over the accreditation cycle are summarized in the following broad categories:

General requirements related to the laboratory's commitment to impartiality and confidentiality in its activities.

Structural requirements related to the range of activities, management structure, the authority, roles and responsibilities of personnel. Documented procedures which ensure a consistent application of activities and the validity of results.

Resource requirements related to the impartiality of personnel. Requirements for a training program, competency testing, authorizations, and ongoing monitoring to ensure the competence of personnel. Facility and security suitability for activities. Records and procedures for equipment to ensure proper functioning and where applicable, establishment of metrological traceability. Requirements for externally provided products and services.

Process requirements related to the handling of test and calibration items in a manner to maintain the integrity of the item. Requirements for chain-of-custody of items to be tested and appropriate methods and procedures. Ensuring the required performance of the methods along with monitoring the validity of the results. Requirements to ensure results are supported by sufficient technical records and are reported accurately, clearly, unambiguously, and objectively. Procedures for nonconforming work and a documented process for handling complaints. Requirements related to the laboratory information management system protection and integrity of data and information.

Management system requirements related to policies and objectives appropriate for the scope of activities. Requirements to control internal and external documents and records. Requirements to address risks and opportunities and timely, well-documented corrective actions. Requirements for an internal audit program and management reviews.

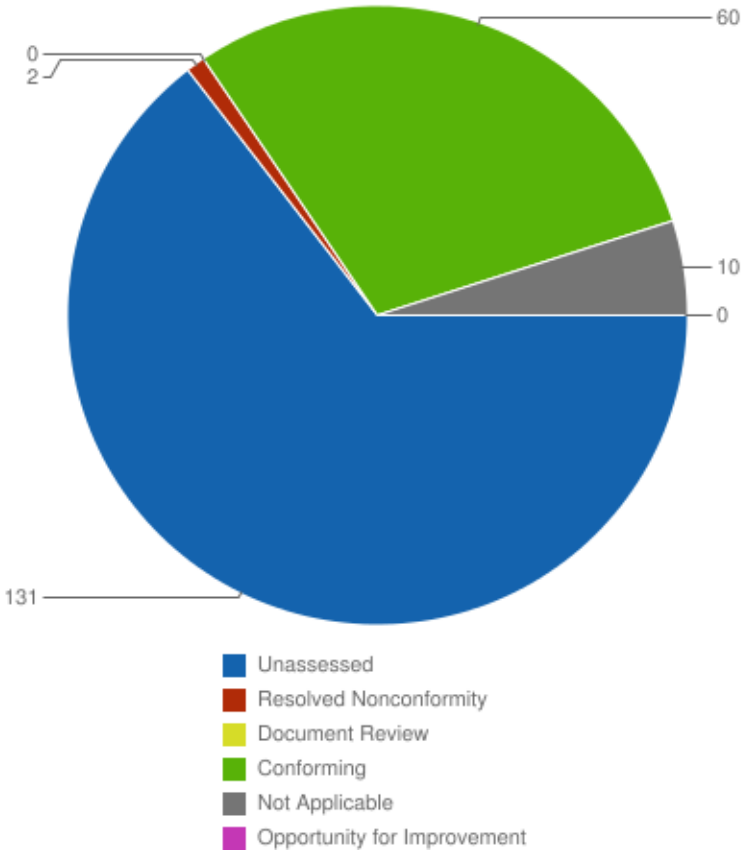
The accreditation activity also evaluates the laboratory’s conformance with their own management system requirements.

ASSESSMENT RESULT:

Based on the assessment techniques and a sample of the objective evidence reviewed during the assessment activity, the assessment team found that the laboratory demonstrated competence to operate a management system that fulfills all applicable accreditation requirements, including those specified within their management system.

Any opportunities for improvement or nonconformities identified during this assessment activity are noted below. All nonconformities will be resolved prior to an accreditation decision by ANAB and a summary provided in a subsequent assessment activity report.

Summary of Comments



Audit Comments

7.8.2 Common requirements for reports (test, calibration or sampling)

7.8.2.1 ISO/IEC 17025:2017 — Resolved Nonconformity

Requirement

Does each report include at least the following information, unless the laboratory has valid reasons for not doing so, thereby minimizing any possibility of misunderstanding or misuse:
a) a title (e.g. ÒTest ReportÓ, ÒCalibration CertificateÓ or ÒReport of SamplingÓ)?
b) the name and address of the laboratory?
c) the location of performance of the laboratory activities, including when performed at a customer facility or at sites away from the laboratoryÕs permanent facilities, or in associated temporary or mobile facilities?
d) unique identification that all its components are recognized as a portion of a complete report and a clear identification of the end?
e) the name and contact information of the customer?
f) identification of the method used?
g) a description, unambiguous identification, and, when necessary, the condition of the item?
h) the date of receipt of the test or calibration item(s), and the date of sampling, where this is critical to the validity and application of the results?
i) the date(s) of performance of the laboratory activity?
j) the date of issue of the report?
k) reference to the sampling plan and sampling method used by the laboratory or other bodies where these are relevant to the validity or application of the results?

l) a statement to the effect that the results relate only to the items tested, calibrated or sampled?
m) the results with, where appropriate, the units of measurement?
n) additions to, deviations, or exclusions from the method?
o) identification of the person(s) authorizing the report?
p) clear identification when results are from external providers?

NOTE Including a statement specifying that the report shall not be reproduced except in full without approval of the laboratory can provide assurance that parts of a report are not taken out of context.

ANAB NOTE 2 A legal requirement that dictates the information to be included in a report is a valid reason to not include one or more listed report elements.

ANAB NOTE 3 i) Date(s) may be reflected as a range of dates or the date of each test or calibration.

ANAB NOTE 4 o) Authorization of the report does not have to be performed by the same person(s) who authorized the results. (see ISO/IEC 17025:2017 7.8.1.1).

Nonconformity Resolution Workflow

Within the toxicology discipline, two of the four reports available for review did not contain a description of the item as required in element g).

Corrective Action Closure Note: The laboratory amended the two reports that did not contain item descriptions. Amended reports, Incident/Corrective Action Plan Form and Corrective Action Response/Nonconformance Review were reviewed along with the root cause analysis. This nonconformity is resolved.

7.8.3 Specific requirements for test reports

7.8.3.1.c).1 ANAB Accreditation Requirement — Resolved Nonconformity

Requirement

Was/Did the measurement uncertainty:
a) included in the report or an annex to the report when it impacts the evaluation of a specification limit stated by a regulatory body, a statute, case law, or other legal requirement?
b) include the measured quantity value, y, along with the associated expanded uncertainty, U, and the coverage probability?
c) in the format of y ± U?
d) limited to at most two significant digits, unless there is a documented rationale for reporting additional significant digits? and
e) reported to the same number of decimal places or digits as the measurement result?

ANAB NOTE 1 a) A legal requirement is created, imposed, and enforced by a third-party external to the laboratory agency.

ANAB NOTE 2 c) For asymmetrical uncertainties, it may be inappropriate to quote a single result for the uncertainty and presentations other than y ± U may be needed.

Nonconformity Resolution Workflow

Within the toxicology discipline, all of the reports available for review did not contain the coverage probability as required in element b).

Corrective Action Closure Note: The lab added the coverage probability to the report template. Four amended reports, the Incident/Corrective Action Plan Form (CAR 2023-10) and the Corrective Action Response/Nonconformance Review were reviewed along with the root cause analysis. This nonconformity is resolved.