



In This Issue

- Accreditation Program
- 2007 Annual Meeting Highlights
- Great Resources
- Volunteer Opportunities

Do you have an interesting case or question you would like to share? Email us at nikkib@aabb.org

AABB Working to Keep it's Accreditation Program Viable

The AABB Board of Directors has determined that the Relationship Testing (RT) Accreditation program must be financially self-sufficient.

The AABB is currently exploring additional sources of revenue and seeking ways to reduce the program's cost. There are several avenues actively being pursued.

► More uniform Assessments

AABB has hired Dr. George Riley as the newest lead quality assessor for the Relationship Testing Accreditation Program.

Before assuming this role, Dr. Riley worked as a consultant performing quality assessments and other quality services evaluating conformance to AABB, ISO and FBI standards. Previously, he was a laboratory director at Fairfax Identity Laboratories and at Seattle-based GeneLex Corporation for a total of 10 years. He conducted postdoctoral research at Seattle Biomedical Research Institute and at the Genetics Department of the University of Washington. His postdoctoral work was conducted at Seattle Biomedical Research Institute and at the University of Washington. A member of AABB, the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (criminalistics), and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, he has published and presented extensively on forensic science topics.

Dr. Riley holds a doctorate in biology from Georgetown University and earned bachelors' degrees in biology and French from Dickinson College.

Having a staff lead assessor for the RT program will ensure uniformity, which will help reduce assessment costs. In addition to reducing cost assigning a single assessor will prevent the growing problem with conflicts of interest between the facilities and assessors.

**NOW
AVAILABLE**

*8th Edition Standards for
Relationship Testing*

&

*8th Edition of Guidance for
Standards for Relationship
Testing Laboratories*

TO ORDER A COPY

JUST CLICK:

<https://portal.aabb.org/apps/marketplace/category.aspx?cat=Standards%20and%20Quality&subcat=Standards>

**The AABB Relationship
Testing Annual Report
Summary**

To obtain a FREE copy

JUST CLICK:

http://www.aabb.org/Content/Accreditation/Parentage_Testing_Accreditation_Program/ptprog.htm

► **Collection Site Qualification**

AABB is currently evaluating the implementation a program for Collection Site Qualification. This program would ensure that collection sites have quality processes, policies and procedures for accurate, uniform and reliable collection of samples. This will benefit the collection sites by increasing the overall quality of their service. It will also give them the competitive advantage of qualification and the use of associated logos that they can legitimately use. This will also address AABB's RT Standard requiring that laboratories qualify their suppliers. The additional revenue from collection site membership dues would spread the cost of the program a little more evenly. An additional benefit may accrue from decreased legal costs attributed to the misuse of the AABB logo and misleading accreditation claims.

► **Researching Partners for the RT Program**

AABB is in discussions with several other accrediting organizations regarding the possibility of partnering the Relationship Testing Accreditation Program, with an eye to increasing efficiency and reducing the overall cost of the program.

► **Exploring other sources of revenue**

AABB is actively exploring other outside sources of revenue, including looking for appropriate grants and examining several other funding opportunities. Please contact George Riley (griley@aabb.org or by phone at 301-312-0347) if you know of grant or other funding opportunities.

As indicated above, the AABB values its accreditation program and is taking measures to both reduce the costs of the accreditation program while improving the quality of the program for our members. As always we welcome your input. If you would like to discuss any ideas or have question please contact George Riley (griley@aabb.org, 301-312-0347), or Holly Rapp (holly_r@aabb.org)



ANNUAL MEETING & TXPO 2007

October 20-23 • Anaheim, California, USA



ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Session: Relationship Testing SIG I:

Held: Saturday, October 20, 2007 10:30 am – 12:00 pm

AABB ACCREDITATION STATS AND CAP SURVEY RESULTS FOR 2006-2007

Mary Mount, as Chair of the Relationship Testing Accreditation Program Unit (RTAPU), gave a presentation discussing AABB Accreditation and CAP Survey Results for 2006-2007.

It was noted that as of July 2007:

- ✓ There are now 47 accredited labs.
- ✓ 17 labs had successful unannounced assessments.
- ✓ No labs were subjected to reassessment.
- ✓ There are 3 new labs with applications still pending – 2 domestic and 1 international.
- ✓ There is 1 lab that either closed or terminated their application.
- ✓ Most of the accredited labs tested 5,000 cases or less per year.
- ✓ The number of labs doing RFLP continues to drop.

RT assessors issued 84 non-conformances to laboratories assessed using the 7th Edition of the Standards for Relationship Testing Laboratories between January 2006 and July 2007. Of the non-conformances issues, 33 were cited in Process Control (Std. Ch. 5.0), 12 in Resources (Std. Ch. 2.0), 11 in Documents and Records (Std. Ch. 6.0), 9 in Equipment (Std. Ch. 3.0), 6 in Organization (Std. Ch. 1.0), 5 in Process Improvement Through Corrective and Preventative Action (Std. Ch. 9.0), 3 in Deviations and Nonconforming Products and Services (Std. Ch. 7.0), 3 in Assessments: Internal and External (Std. Ch. 8.0), 2 in Supplier and Customer Issues (Std. Ch. 4.0) and 0 in Facilities and Safety (Std. Ch. 10).

The CAP survey has had great participation. The number of labs performing STRs, both A-STRs and Y-STRs has nearly replaced all other testing. There were only 2 labs performing RFLP for the 3 surveys listed below. The number of labs participating in the 3 surveys reviewed in this presentation ranged from a low of 87 to a high of 104. The overall outcome of the 3 surveys can be found in the tables below.

PARF-C 2006

	Included AF	Excluded AF
Correct Results	100%	99%
Additional Testing Required		1%

PARF-A 2007

	Included AF	Excluded AF
Correct Results	100%	100%

PARF-B 2007

	Included PAR-08 AF	Excluded PAR-07 AF
Correct Results	100%	100%

AABB RELATIONSHIP TESTING STANDARDS PROGRAM UNIT

George C. Maha, as Chair of the Relationship Testing Standards Program Unit (RTSPU), gave a presentation discussing the 8th edition of Standards, which go into effect January 1, 2008, and other committee business.

During the year the RTSPU met with the Department of Homeland Security, which was concerned about how samples are collected for immigration testing and the potential for fraud. Of concern was testing without a chain of custody, which is not covered under these standards and is not acceptable to DHS. A continuing dialogue has been established with DHS to discuss immigration testing issues.

The 8th edition of standards contains a number of new standards. Many of these were discussed. These new standards include standards concerning Emergency Preparedness, competency testing, promotional materials, new language addressing those instances when a formal graded external proficiency testing program is not (or is no longer) available for the genetic systems used to report test results, new samples storage requirements, reporting for mitochondrial DNA, incorporating non-autosomal findings in the combined likelihood index, changes in the need for recording a history of transfusion in the preceding 3 months, or any history of allogeneic hematopoietic progenitor cell transplantation and other standards. The guidance document for the 8th edition of RT standards will be published in the 1st quarter of 2008.

The committee thanked Dr. David Gjertson who rotated off the committee. He served as the international liaison to the International Society for Forensic Genetics (ISFG) and was a co-author of ISFG's recommendations on paternity calculations. (David W. Gjertson, Charles H. Brenner, Max P. Baur, Angel Carracedo, Francois Guidet, Juan A. Luque, Rüdiger Lessig, Wolfgang R. Mayr, Vince L. Pascali, Mechthild Prinz, Peter M. Schneider, Niels Morling. ISFG: Recommendations on biostatistics in paternity testing. Forensic Science International: Genetics 2007; 1:223–231). Also leaving was Dr. Marilyn Pollack, who served as the liaison from the American Society of Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics (ASHI). Both individuals have been involved with the committee for many years and helped to create standards with diligent editing and insightful comments. Dr. Maha's tenure as chair ended December 31, 2008. He announced the new chair of the RTSPU, Dr. Michael L. Baird whose tenure began January 1, 2008.

**IF YOU MISSED THE
MEETING THIS YEAR
YOU CAN STILL ORDER
HANDOUTS OR
STREAMING AUDIO
WITH POWERPOINT
SLIDES OF ALL THE
SESSIONS HELD
DURING THE 2007
ANNUAL MEETING BY
VISITING

THE
AABB LIVE
LEARNING
CENTER
JUST CLICK:**

<http://www.softconference.com/aabb/>

****CONTENT FROM
2002- 2006 SESSIONS
ARE STILL
AVAILABLE**

ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS cont..

Session: Relationship Testing SIG II:

Held: Saturday, October 20, 2007 2:00 pm – 5:30 pm

Event Description

This session was devoted to the relationship testing issues encountered for immigration cases. During this program, a set of standard criteria for inclusion and exclusion of various relationships was addressed, through discussions and presentations. There was also presentation about the use of appropriate databases for immigration cases where the tested persons are from world wide various ethnicity. Ethical issues generated by relationship testing were also discussed.

Session: Forensic Sciences

Held: Sunday, October 21, 2007 8:30 am – 10:00 am

Event Description:

This workshop highlighted the recent advances in several traditional disciplines in forensics including forensic biology and forensic chemistry. In addition, the newly emerging field of forensic microbiology was introduced and the challenges facing this area were discussed.

Session: What's new in HLA Typing and Other Genetic Polymorphisms - ASHI/AABB Joint Program

Held: Sunday, October 21, 2007 2:00 pm – 5:30 pm

Event Description:

Experienced speakers discussed the latest findings in the areas of HLA antigen and antibody testing as they relate to donor/recipient matching, organ transplantation and TRALI. They also explored testing for polymorphisms in genetic markers as they relate to disease risk assessment, identification and relationship analysis.

Did you know ?

- 1) Additional questions or uncertainties regarding any standard can be submitted to the Relationship Testing Accreditation Program Unit for review as a topic for the newsletter and/or educational topic at the National AABB Meeting. Forward topic suggestions to nikkib@aabb.org
- 2) Questions encountered during an onsite assessment can be addressed immediately by calling 301.215.6492.

GREAT RESOURCES

- ✚ You can obtain a list of Accredited Relationship Testing Laboratories at the following link:
http://www.aabb.org/Content/Accreditation/Parentage_Testing_Accreditation_Program/AABB_Accredited_Parentage_Testing_Laboratories/aboutptlabs.htm
- ✚ The AABB Career Link is a good way to bring together great job opportunities and great candidates. To find out more information visit the following link:
http://www.aabb.org/Content/Professional_Development/CareerLink/careerlink.htm

Misleading Claims of Accreditation and Logo Misuse

With the explosion of advertising on the internet, there has been increasing misuse of AABB's trademarked logos and misleading claims of AABB accreditation. We are renewing our efforts to stop such practices and are actively searching out these organizations so that we can address this problem on a more global scale. These efforts benefit accredited laboratories by preserving the strong value of AABB accreditation and by ensuring that customer attention is focused on laboratories that actually *are* accredited. Our facilities work hard to achieve and maintain accreditation and deserve the maximum benefit of that accreditation. Increased vigilance will also benefit laboratories' customers by ensuring that they get the accredited-laboratory test that they have paid for. You can aid these efforts by bringing to our attention instances of logo misuse or misleading statements regarding accreditation. Please advise AABB's Accreditation Department (accrediation@aabb.org) by providing the offending Web site and briefly describing the issue. It would be particularly helpful if you copy and email the actual link from your browser's address bar, as some offending organizations maintain multiple Web sites. The AABB policy on logo use is posted on the AABB Web site under the Terms of Use link at the bottom of the home page.

WANTED

RTAPU or RTSPU Member

Are you currently an assessor? Would you like to be involved in planning for sessions at the AABB Annual Meeting? Would you like to review corrective action plans for process non-conformances? Would you like to be involved in the newsletter? If these issues are of interest to you, the **Relationship Testing Accreditation Program Unit** would like to have you as a member.

Are you currently an AABB Member? Would you like to be involved in creating and revising the Relationship Testing Standards? Would you like to review the requests for variance from the Standards? Would you like to be involved in creating and revising the Guidance for the Standards? If these issues are of interest to you, the **Relationship Testing Standards Program Unit** would like to have you as a member.

Please contact Pam Lubel at the AABB National Office at plubel@aabb.org.

Articles

Do you have an interesting case or question you would like to share through this newsletter? Or is there a topic or issue you would like us to write about? Email us at nikkib@aabb.org

2007-2008 RTAPU Members:

**Mary Mount, MT(ASCP)
Chair**

**Amarjit Chahal, PhD
Karen S. Miller, MT(ASCP)
Sudhir K. Sinha, PhD
Vicki Yarnell, MT(ASCP),
CHS(ABHI)
Michael L. Baird, PhD
George Maha, JD, PhD**

**Board Representative:
Kathleen Houston,
MT(ASCP)SBB**

2007-2008 RTSPU Members:

**Michael L. Baird, PhD
Chair**

**George Maha, JD, PhD
Jane Pritchard, BS,
MT(ASCP), CLSp(MB)
James Mason, PhD
Susan Greenspoon, PhD
Mary Mount, MT(ASCP)
David Einum, PhD, BS
Bruce Wilder, MD, JD
Neils Morling, MD, DSc**

**Board Representative:
Joy Fridey, MD, MBA**

**VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS PUBLICATION DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT
OFFICIAL AABB POLICY AND SHOULD NOT BE RELIED ON FOR LEGAL ADVICE.**