

UKAS Asbestos Technical Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes (SUMMARY) of the 12th Meeting - Monday 22nd March 2010 at UKAS (Feltham)

Attendees:

S Burbeck, Adams Environmental Ltd (SB – Chair)
W Smith, UKAS (WS - minutes)
G Burdett, Health & Safety Laboratory (GB)
B Sutherland, Noble Asbestos Consultancy Ltd (BS)
J O' Sullivan, Representing Asbestos Testing and Consultancy (ATaC) (JOS)
R Bettinson, UKAS (RJB - Secretary)
Ken Hill, Health & Safety Executive, Asbestos Policy (KH)
B Daunton, Health & Safety Executive (BD)
Bob Webster, Independent technical assessor (RW)

Apologies:

C Perryman, Greenwich Analytical Services (Local government) (CP)
C Willoughby, British Occupational Hygiene Society (CW)
P Bodsworth, Independent technical assessor (PLB)
S Mallagh, Health & Safety Executive, Asbestos Policy (Representative KH)
Bob Clark, ARCA representative (BC)
Paul Winstone, Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (PW)

1. Welcome and Apologies

SB welcomed all to the 12th Meeting of the UKAS Asbestos TAC meeting & acknowledged the apologies received.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes from the last meeting were agreed by committee members

3. Matters Arising/Progress with Actions

- Action 130709/3.0 – update to the ATaC work done with this issue. Thanked UKAS for their input into the document. One member of ATaC has tried the approach suggested and ATaC are now working on the reporting side of this document. Working with HSE to ensure no contradiction with HSG248. Focus will also be on the training of analysts; more work is required to ensure CAR 2006 is adhered to. CAR section 10 details the requirement for training, however there is concern there is not enough information as to what is deemed sufficient training and therefore is felt that clarification of this is required especially with respect to practical training, refresher training, keep up to date with industry and all aspects of 4SC work for which they are authorised. Members agree this is a positive move to add clarity of the training required. Considerable debate ensued re the standard of 4SCs. This work by ATaC for the ALG action will continue and UKAS will be informed of progress / contact for consultation as required, for the purposes of the TAC action raised at 130709 the action is closed. Action closed
- Action 130709/3.1 – action completed and closed
- Action 130709/7.0 – Bob Clark appointed, action completed and closed
- **Action 130709/4.1** – Training provider committee member: Proposed that an existing TAC member could also act in this capacity - Member to ask UKATA if this would be acceptable and update UKAS with the response.
- Action 130709/8.0 - action completed and closed
- Action 130709/9.0 – action completed and closed

- Action 130709/11.0 – action completed and closed
- Action 130709/11.1 – All committee members agreed a maximum number of samples to be analysed in any 24 hr period to be included in next HSG248, and to feedback any comments re number of samples, max number of samples etc, to GB. Action completed and closed
- Action 130709/12.0 – AIB Has set up a website advertising quality companies (no involvement with UKAS) with this sort of purpose in mind; this has started but is still very much in its infancy. Strongly pushes the UKAS brand, UKAS will continue to monitor this site to ensure it is not misrepresented, however this has not been the case thus far. Action Closed

4. UKAS Asbestos TAC Committee Membership

- Bob Clarke form LAR in Manchester has accepted role to represent contractor.
- JOS stood in at the last meeting as ATaC representative but is now a full committee member.
- Colin Perryman is resigning due to relocation. He has proposed a replacement, UKAS to follow up. **Action 220310/4.0**
- Terms of reference (TOR) – UKAS reconfirmed the purpose of the: It is to advise UKAS on technical issues, etc (see TOR for detail). UKAS needs to ensure the accreditation service it provides is fit for purpose. Any weaknesses in the process need to be highlighted. The core purpose of TAC needs to be maintained.
- All members reminded as part of signing up to the committee there is a statement of confidentiality – this extends to meeting discussion but also any documentation UKAS circulate for comment prior to general publication.

5. Update from UKAS

UKAS reported to the committee on company activities since the last TAC meeting: Although the asbestos sector has experienced difficulties in recent months, UKAS has continued to see growth in this sector since last meeting in July 2009:

- 14 new asbestos applicants (IB's, a couple also doing Bulk ID)
- 7 resignations (2 due to merger, 2 resigned IB but kept ISO17025, 3 resigned due to commercial reasons)
- Granted 3 new accreditations (All IB, but one also included testing)
- 6 Suspensions (3 were imposed by UKAS)
- 1 Termination of accreditation

In December 2009 UKAS was formally appointed as the UK's National Accreditation Body (NAB) in accordance with EU Regulations (implemented through Statutory Instrument No 3155/2009).

Resources:

- UKAS is increasing its internal resource in relation to asbestos:
- Mark Wagstaff joined as AM in January (previously independent assessor);
- Kate Brooks (former UKAS AM) returning after a year overseas;
- Frank Smith & Colin Smith both authorised as ISO 17020 technical assessors;
- George Sanders going through monitoring to become authorised ISO 17025 technical assessor.

UKAS is currently investing heavily in new IT systems to radically improve on its workflows and interactions with assessors & customer. This includes looking at potential for customers to access its system online to determine progress, submit evidence, etc.

UKAS has continued to participate in a number of Asbestos road shows organised by bodies such as BOHS, ATaC, BMTA as well as independents.

Some committee members suggested that UKAS should look at becoming more prominent in Yell.com & Google searches etc to promote the accredited services of UKAS customers in the asbestos sector. UKAS will discuss further with UKAS awareness campaign staff

Action 220310/5.0

TA Meeting: 23 November 2009 – Derby

- Main item was a detailed discussion following a gap analysis exercise on draft HSG 264 (Outcome was the HSG264 self declaration form and survey guide transfer announcement issued on UKAS website 01 Feb 2010)
- Discussion on BOHS expectations on Survey Reports
- Discussed complaint received regarding environmental monitoring within Bulk ID lab (Outcome: finding was valid and confirmation included in 1st issue of Asbestos Technical Bulletin)
- Clarification given on asbestos in soil
- AOB – various issues discussed.

6. Update from HSE

- HSG264 – published 29th Jan, 3250 copies sold (excludes downloads – figures not yet available);
- Hidden Killer – last strand on radio was last Nov / Dec. Mail shot was undertaken – sent to 87,500 people - same target audience as previous (tradesperson). Further success with the last radio ad campaign: Target audience has been very receptive.
- Duty to manage will now be focus for next 2-3 years - stakeholder involvement has already stated. More targeting of specific sectors, rather than blanket radio ads. Mail-shot currently under design.
- Duty to Manage evaluation: evidence gathering is now completed and will be published later.
- Meeting arranged with lease agreements / duty holder responsibilities to be discussed. Aim is to promote the asbestos issues within these codes to be considered.

7. Update from BOHS

Due to unforeseen circumstances the BOHS representative was unable to attend the meeting and sent apologies

8. 4-Stage Clearance – UKAS assessment approach & sanctions

- UKAS outlined this in an open discussion, seeking feedback from the committee on the approach UKAS should adopt when identifying on-site failings in 4SC.
- Current process: Go out on site to witness the 4SC process. Sometimes minor findings are raised which may be deemed as low risk, however on occasion significant risk is identified. Expectation is that the analyst is immediately suspended from authorised list. The organisation has to investigate and apply appropriate corrective actions and UKAS requests to witness another analyst demonstrate the process. Once this has been completed, and subject to the second analyst demonstrating competence, UKAS can maintain accreditation. UKAS asked opinion on whether this was the right approach to take?
- UKAS reminded the committee that it accredits the organisation not the individuals: The organisation has to train, monitor, authorise all personnel. If they can't demonstrate this to UKAS assessors then it demonstrates they

have problems with their management system. This will seriously affect UKAS's confidence in organisations use of competent analysts.

- Should UKAS take a draconian approach and suspend lab immediately until everything is sorted? Need to take into consideration whether analyst is having bad day (e.g. nerves or illness) or being malicious. Also consider financial impact of this, and difficulty in demonstrating competence in 4SC without holding accreditation.
- Members suggested an increase in assessment time - asses this area more i.e. not just once per year. Other suggestions included taking a similar approach to that of HSE, witness all 4 stages every year, extend assessment time if clearance witnessing eats into other assessment time, UKAS nominating the staff to witness rather than laboratory, and more unannounced visits.
- Members agreed it was an area requiring further consideration and action.

Action 220310/8.0

9. Asbestos Bulletin Issue 1 – Final comments

A suggestion was made that the “asbestos in soils” section 1e be removed in total, with no need for it to be included as it comments on what is not covered by accreditation rather than what accreditation requirements are. Although the point is acknowledged, UKAS confirmed it receives many queries from laboratories asking whether accreditation was required in this area, hence the need to clarify the position. Members confirmed reports do say it's been screened and does not confirm asbestos present. It is recognised that under regulation, soil analysis organisations should be adhering to all requirements and analysing properly.

HSE to discuss further with Environment Agency.

Action 220310/9.0

10. LAB 30 review

UKAS had previously circulated the latest draft of Lab 30 for comments. Some issues were discussed. UKAS will review these points and circulate the next draft to relevant people for final comments before its issue for public consultation. Committee members to feedback all comments to UKAS.

Action 220310/10.0

11. RG 8 Review

UKAS had previously circulated the latest draft of RG8 for comment. Some comments were received regarding re-inspections. UKAS will review these points and circulate the next draft to relevant people for final comments before its issue for public consultation. Committee members to feedback all comments to UKAS.

Action 220310/11.0

12. AOB

One member wanted to highlight there had been some debate within the asbestos industry with respect to the increase in UKAS assessment fees, and that some organisations are concerned about the increase during a difficult time for the industry due to the economic climate.

13. Date of next meeting

Members discussed the possibility of a further joint CFM / UKAS Asbestos TAC meeting and agreed this would be useful. UKAS to contact CFM secretary and discuss / arrange for later in 2010.

Action 220310/13.0

Chair thanked all members for their attendance and contribution to a successful meeting.

End