

**Summary of Minutes of the
UKAS Asbestos Technical Advisory Committee
7th Meeting held on 8th December 2006 at HSE, Rose Court.**

Present	Bill Sanderson	(Bureau Veritas Training) – Chair
	Rob Bettinson	(UKAS)
	Wendy Smith	(UKAS) Secretary
	Rob Blackburn	(ATaC)
	Sue Burbeck	(Adams Environmental Ltd)
	Garry Burdett	(HSL)
	Barry Tylee	(HSL)
	Colin Perryman	(Greenwich Analytical Services (Local government))
	Kevin Walkin	(HSE Policy)
	Peter Bodsworth	(Independent technical assessor)
	John Lyons	(BOHS)
	Neil Grabham	(BOHS)
	Bruce Sutherland	(Noble Asbestos Consultancy Lt
	Apologies	Bob Daunton
Bob Webster		(Independent technical assessor)
Paul Winstone		(RICS)
Steve Sadley		(ARCA)

This meeting was held jointly with the HSE’s Committee on Fibre Measurement (CFM) and included members of CFM not listed above. The summary of minutes listed below only relate to those items that directly relate to the UKAS Technical Advisory Committee.

1 Welcome & Apologies

2 Minutes of the last Meeting

The minutes of the previous meetings (TAC on 27th March 2006, CFM on 2nd March 2006) were accepted as accurate records of the meetings. There were also minutes available of a UKAS TAC sub-committee which met on October 13th, 2006 at Rose Court to discuss matters relating to insurance requirements for asbestos surveyors accredited under ISO 17020.

3 Update from UKAS

- (a) UKAS have taken on two new assessment managers who will also be able to do technical assessments themselves. UKAS have also taken on two new assessors for asbestos surveys (ISO 17020); one will also be able to undertake assessments of testing activities to ISO 17025.
- (b) A Technical Assessor meeting was held at HSL Buxton in November 2006. The purpose of the meeting was to promote the consistency of approach and interpretation between assessors. Three microscope manufacturers had brought microscopes to demonstrate equipment for discriminating non-asbestos fibres.

- (c) UKAS had tried to keep labs informed of the latest information on the change to WHO rules, with three letters during the past months; these letters to the labs also go on the UKAS website. The change had been expected for 1st October but had actually happened on 13th November (in England, Wales and Scotland) but with uncertainty as to whether it might have been later. The new regulations do not yet apply in Northern Ireland. They will apply there from January 2007. At the last TAC meeting, it had been agreed that laboratories could maintain accreditation at the time of the change by completing a self-declaration form (confirming adequate preparations and provisions). UKAS had also published a number of asbestos update articles in the News Section of its website to keep organisations informed of changes agreed by its Technical Advisory Committee
- (d) There is now one accredited Inspection Body NIACS (National Individual Asbestos Certification Scheme). ABICS (Asbestos Buildings Inspectors Certification Scheme) is progressing. Rob Blackburn commented that there had been some contact between the two bodies to establish common ground and to work towards achieving the same standards from both bodies. The important objective is to ensure a robust independent assessment and that the output is from a competent surveyor.

Insurance meeting feedback

- (e) The papers tabled for the meeting included minutes from the “First asbestos Insurance meeting (sub meeting of the TAC)”. Representatives from two insurance brokers (Miles Smith, and Howden) had been at the meeting; other attendees are listed on that Meeting’s Minutes.
- (f) Insurance is required under ISO 17020, as “adequate liability cover”. That should cover the public, employees, and professional indemnity. It was agreed that it should cover bodily injury and property damage within professional indemnity. Miles Smith had devised a form that organisations could send to their insurance brokers to confirm the adequacy of their own insurance cover.

4 Legislation and Guidance

- (a) Dr Walkin reported that the Control of Asbestos Regulations came into force on the 13th November. Textured coatings are now normally outside the licensing requirements. There are two new documents available. The asbestos essentials guidance is now downloadable from the website (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm>). There will be sheets added on textured coatings. An asbestos essentials type approach may be developed for the Duty to Manage.
- (b) HSE is also moving towards campaigns on asbestos. There is a campaign recently commenced aimed at heating and ventilation engineers, with simple messages on playing cards. There may be campaigns on better implementation of the Duty to Manage. HSE will be evaluating the effectiveness of the Duty to Manage regulation to determine whether anything is needed to make it more effective. The evaluation would need to assess not just whether there has been a survey but whether that information is used and used effectively. HSE also want to take a stock of how much asbestos remains in place in buildings, based on the information from asbestos surveys and held in asbestos registers.
- (c) Under regulation 5, asbestos must be identified prior to the demolition of a building. Action will be taken on demolitions where this has not been done.
- (d) The Contractors’ Guide had been published since the previous CFM meeting. The Guide includes recommendations on trainers and training. A training working group has been set up. Training companies have signed up to a code of practice which includes meeting the standards set out in the Contractors Guide.

- (e) Dr Gibson (HSE/CFM) stated that a review and revision of MDHS 100 will begin in January 2007 involving a range of stakeholders. The Analysts' Guide (HSG248) will be reviewed later in 2007. A new Annex 2 of the revised HSG 248 will cover the water absorption test (which is already described in the ACoP L143). The new HSG 248 should not require substantial revision but this will not be started until summer 2007. A revised appendix 2 on the identification of asbestos is almost

5 PT Participation

AIMS

- (a) From the latest round of AIMS (Asbestos in Materials Scheme) only 9 (4%) of the UK labs had unsatisfactory scores. The number of labs in the scheme is approximately 245. AIMS also offers an option of a blind PT as an additional test: 18 labs participated.
- (b) There is a sub-scheme for samples for TEM (Transmission electron microscopy) analysis, which has 16 labs, mostly French. Some of these samples could be interesting examples for testing discrimination by polarising light microscopy.

RICE

- (c) HSL has taken over the contract for RICE. Two IOM staff had transferred to HSL and would be continuing to work on the scheme.
- (d) The new WHO rules will mean that revisions to the reference values will be needed on many of the RICE samples. There are some options in how to redefine the reference values, and the steering committee will review the results being obtained before reporting back to laboratories.
- (e) The new WHO rules also give scope for discrimination using techniques such as polarising light microscopy. Therefore, the scheme may seek to generate some samples that would test proficiency in this technique. The recent demonstration of microscopes, brought by manufacturers to the assessor meeting in November, had indicated that most of these microscopes did not perform well. Mr Bodsworth noted that, in his experience as a UKAS assessor, most labs are saying "no" to doing discrimination.

6 Qualifications

- (a) Mr Lyons reported that he had handed responsibility for BOHS qualification to Mr Grabham, who is a member of the BOHS faculty. There had been high demand for places on the P403 and P404 courses, so much so that it had not been possible to release any slides to HSL for recalibration of the reference values to WHO counts. They had been running 10 to 11 exams per week.
- (b) Mr Lyons stated that one set of the reference slides was missing. He appealed for the slides to be returned anonymously to BOHS, if anyone might know who has them.
- (c) Currently training course providers are giving training in ERM counting and BOHS will continue to assess against ERM and the old regulations until the end of 2006. Contractually, training providers had to be given 3 months warning of any change in course content. In view of the uncertainty of the implementation date for CAR 2006, BOHS had decided to implement the new WHO rules for P403 from 1st January.
- (d) Mr Bettinson commented that there had been potential problems brought to his attention regarding quite high failure rates on the P403 courses. Mr Lyons confirmed that they had experienced no problems that would suggest the January implementation date should be delayed further. Two or three

out of 8 fail on the counting. There is feed back to the course providers and the candidates on the failures, so as to help improve courses and to help candidates re-take the tests. Many failures are due to the calculation exercise rather than the fibre-counting itself.

- (e) BOHS have developed refresher courses, with written exams afterwards:
 - i. P402 (Types 1 & 2 surveys) one-day course, available from 1st March '07;
 - ii. P402 (Type 3 surveys) one-day course, available from 1st March '07;
 - iii. P405 refresher will be available from later in 2007
 - iv. CoCA refresher will be available from later in 2007
- (f) There was a suggestion that HSE should be involved in setting a requirement for refresher courses, but Dr Walkin suggested that they are industry schemes and it should be for the industry to set recommendations. Mr Blackburn undertook to seek views of ATaC members.

7 Type 3 Surveys

Concerns have been raised regarding the standard of Type-3 surveys. A RICS committee convened by Peter Irvine is currently reviewing this. A Guidance document has been drafted as an output, and circulated for comment: this can be fed into the MDHS 100 review.

8 Water Absorption method

The water absorption method is described in the ACoP and in the autumn 2006 issue of Fibre Aspects; it will also be in the revised HSG 248. It was confirmed that as this test is now published as an ACoP it can be accredited by UKAS.

9 Membership

The Chairman noted that John Lyons had now stepped down from his role as Asbestos Technical Manager for BOHS and that his role would be covered by Neil Grabham. He thanked John Lyons for his contributions to both the UKAS Asbestos TAC and CFM.

10 Next Meeting

The Chairman thanked HSE for hosting this event. UKAS and HSE will review the value of holding further joint meetings.

The next UKAS Asbestos Technical Advisory Committee meeting will be held in early summer 2007.