



**19<sup>th</sup> UKAS Asbestos**  
**Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Summary**

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> August - Meeting Room G, UKAS Offices (Feltham)**

**Attendees:**

Sue Burbeck – Adams Environmental, (SB, Chair)  
Wendy Smith, UKAS (WS)  
John Abbiss – UKAS (JA, Observer)  
George Sanders, UKAS (GS, Secretary)  
Helen Ratcliffe, Health & Safety Executive, Asbestos Policy Unit (HR)  
Martin Gibson, Health & Safety Executive, HM Principal Specialist Inspector (MG)  
Laurie Davies – Health & Safety Laboratory/ Independent technical assessor (LSTD)  
Colette Willoughby, British Occupational Hygiene Society (BOHS)/Independent  
Technical Assessor (CW)  
Rob Blackburn – Asbestos Removal Contractors Association (RB - ARCA)  
Arran Cobley – Hampshire County Council (AC)  
John Richards – Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) (JR)  
Jon Francis – Asbestos Testing and Consultancy (ATaC) (JF - in place of Steve  
Platkiw)

**Apologies:**

Garry Burdett - Health & Safety Laboratory (GB)  
Craig Bell - Health & Safety Executive (CB)  
Steve Platkiw – ATaC (SP)  
Gerald Hudd – Independent Technical Assessor (GAH)

**Guest Speaker:**

Richard Burton – RSPH (RB - Qualifications) – Agenda Items 1, 2, 3 and 7 only

**1 Welcome/Apologies (SB)**

The Chair welcomed all to the 19th Meeting of the UKAS Asbestos TAC meeting & acknowledged the apologies received including Steve Platkiw, who has been replaced for this meeting by Jon Francis to ensure ATaC had a suitable representation for the meeting.

**Introduction:**

John Abbiss (UKAS) was introduced as Wendy Smith's UKAS replacement on the TAC Committee. John's background technically is in micro-biology, and has substantial experience dealing with matters of accreditation within UKAS and its predecessor NAMAS. John oversees a number of cases associated with asbestos and will be supporting Louise Wainwright in her role as Asbestos Technical Focal Person moving forward. Louise is taking over from George Sanders as the TAC Secretary as part of her new role.



## 2/ Minutes from 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting (SB)

No comments identified

## 3/ UKAS Update (WS)

### Company Wide

Review of organisation:

Assessors with different skills and customers with different needs have been identified. In order to better match skills with customer needs there will be 3 service delivery models going forward: Corporate; Core (similar to current model with specific Sectors); Enterprise (generally customers with less than 6 days per year on average). Consolidated Liaison Office Teams and Operations Support Team (OST) have been developed. OST will support monitoring, evaluating etc.

Restructure Benefits: Better use of staff skills with varied roles. Aim for reduction in non-conforming work, with improved customer satisfaction

### Affect on Asbestos Issues:

WS moving to Corporate Section Head and so this TAC meeting will be last one she attends. John Abbiss to replace Wendy moving forward.

GS being replaced by Louise Wainwright as TAC Secretary and Asbestos Technical Focal Person. Again this is GS last TAC Meeting

Frank Smith moving to OST but will retain a technical assessor role

Colin Smith moving to Enterprise but will continue to be involved with the Asbestos Licensing Group (ALG)

Mark Wagstaff moving to Enterprise. Attends FPTSC which will continue. Mentoring programme to be reviewed by new Section Head for Life Sciences & Occupational Hygiene (JB) and Louise Wainwright in next few weeks

### Section Update:

Number of applicants has reduced in recent months

Schedules updated for IBs who requested Reinspections via Self Declaration process: out of 153 Inspection Bodies (IBs) eligible for reinspections 70 have been revised. Further interest since 1<sup>st</sup> August and so this number is likely to increase in the medium term.

TAC members discussed the aspects of the restructure in terms of:

- Perceived difference between Corporate and Core Teams not clear
- Aspects related to improving customer feedback which are being addressed
- Criteria used to define which customers go into which Sector?
- Grounds for UKAS to make such changes as the sole accreditation body in the UK operating under a memorandum of understanding

The differences between Corporate and Core were clarified: Essentially the bigger and more complex the accreditation needs of a customer, will determine if managed by the Corporate Team, e.g. Number of scopes, disciplines as well as number of



days required to maintain accreditation on an annual basis are all factors in the allocation process. Approximately 70 customers fall in this category

By restructuring the management of cases will vary but the actual assessment of customers will not change. Currently the Assessment Manager (AM) maintains case management but the aim is to integrate the management of caseloads so that LOs' undertake a more pivotal role in the process, enabling AMs to be away from the office and not at the expense of customers' needs in general. Time spent on customer management/utilisation is also aimed at being improved accordingly.

The justification for these changes has been overseen both internally and externally, with the aim to deliver service better without compromising rigour of assessment. The ongoing process of customer feedback (now overseen by the Technical and Quality Governance Group) is monitored by the Executive and the Board, which formed the basis for this restructure. Formalised external input is attained via The Policy Advisory Forum, which in turn is supported by the Policy Advisory Council. These are committees that comprise of a number of stakeholders that meet on a regular basis. Additionally site based forums (not managed by UKAS) across the UK have been held with invited customers for independent feedback, which is bench-marked.

The changes implemented in recent months have been done under consultation with checks conducted to verify process taken.

Acknowledged that:-

- OST already live
- Corporate – live as of 1<sup>st</sup> Oct
- Life Sciences & Occupational Hygiene planned to be live in February 2016 (the main section for technically managing accreditation in the asbestos sector) along with the other Core Sections and the Enterprise Section)

#### **4/ HSE Update (HR)**

Due to the sunset/review clause in recent Regulations CAR2012 needs to be assessed to see if still fit-for-purpose by 2017. Confirmed that the review has already started

Europe considering whether to improve the asbestos directive (and others) by having one collective super directive. This may lead to possible change to UK Regulations.

Details relating to the Analyst's Project, which ended in April, were disseminated to Committee Members and mirrored those given at a recent ALG meeting. Acknowledged that the final report has not been documented yet but due for publishing at the end of September. However the results from the project are to be fed into the revised Analysts' Guide.

The process for the project involved visits to 22 Laboratories and 20 on-site assessments of 4 Stage Clearance works.



- Issues identified were varied and consisted of:-
- Decontamination; Lack of clarity on various stages of DCU
    - Lab decontamination procedures could be clearer: Analysts were unclear whether written procedures existed
    - Lack of practical training stated by analysts
    - Analysts unsure when to use decon unit
  - General;
    - Domestic clothing being worn beneath coveralls
    - Lab instructions for 4SC not clear enough/poorly written or not followed
    - Some analysts not checking DCU as still in use
    - Fit of RPE; clean shaven issues
  - Stage 1 :-
    - Analysts not taking account of builders equipment/transit route
    - Lack of contextual info on Certificate of Reoccupation (CoR) to confirm no acms debris present
    - Reluctance to tell Contractor at S1 about transit route issues
  - Stage 2 :-
    - Analyst doing their own cleaning
    - Systematic approach to inspection not evident
    - Mirror not issued to analyst
    - Lack of contextual info on CoR to support analyst's decisions
  - Stage 3 :-
    - Sampling not clear on multiple-rooms
    - Rush counting on slides
    - Timing discrepancy on CoR
    - No brush disturbance
  - S4 :-
    - Not inspecting areas whilst enclosures removed

Overall findings were observed by Committee as disappointing, although not known at this point how many of the 20 witnessed activities were found to be satisfactory. That said the HSE recognises the need for improvement. Forthcoming Guidance will reinforce this with additional measures to the current process.

Technically the findings raised by the HSE are not dissimilar to those which UKAS Technical Assessors find when assessing analysts, which gives credence to the issues identified.

Other suggested improvements noted include:-

- Having a list of approved analysts (to avoid incompetent analysts 'moving' to unsuspecting Labs)
- Ensure analysts/labs are not employed by the Contractor with outlined benefits recommended
- Restrict the number of enclosures inspected per day



- Informing clients via a Guidance Note on what they should be checking on: Note will go on-site to include reporting needs
- Issuing reports electronically, on the same day as the Clearance

Aside from any of these actions implemented it is noted that 37157 jobs were notified to the HSE by year end of April 2015. Client involvement is observed as key to future improvements being observed. Since April 2015 the revised CDM Regulations now require a H&S File to be compiled when a second contractor is in attendance. For the purposes of asbestos removal; Licensed Asbestos Removal Contractor - is one contractor and the Analyst is considered to be a second contractor and thus triggers some additional requirements.

#### **5/ BOHS – Update (CW)**

With the practical examination change implemented at the beginning of the year there have been a few challenges with marking and markers. But these have since been addressed and now more robust than previous. Pass rates consistent to those attained before change.

Trends indicate that candidates are either Poor or Good with no 'middle ground'. No changes envisaged within BOHS.

Change to exams and feedback to candidates: The Electronic Management System provides feedback on each section of the syllabus as well as a percentage of the total - Significant improvement.

#### **6/ ATaC – Update (JF)**

No changes to organisation  
Approx. 71 members are UKAS accredited.  
Process for dissemination of asbestos related issues to Laboratories to be clarified

#### **7/ RSPH Level 4 Certificate in Asbestos Laboratory and Project Management (SB/RB/JF)**

Discussion regarding progress of the qualification proceeded with the following issues:-

ATaC stated that this qualification is not intended to be equivalent to the CoCA, but offered as an alternative to add to the existing suite of qualifications currently available.

Further discussion confirmed that the purpose of the course was for: Lab Management to operate a Testing Laboratory/Inspection Office; understanding the ISO Standards and; being able to interpret results.

A need for more documented clarity on the RSPH/ATaC qualification was agreed



UKAS iterated that for accreditation purposes HSE approved qualifications were historically implemented by the BOHS. However the development of the Industry has led to alternative training providers, which UKAS recognises. To remain impartial UKAS will assign *equal recognition* to any suitable qualification that can be demonstrated to the Asbestos TAC as being fit-for-purpose. UKAS recognition does not mean any particular course being recognised as equivalent in its qualified status to another course.

- *Outcome to the Pilot Scheme?*

Data from the Scheme to be made available to TAC members.

- *How do we know the work has been done by the individual?*

RSPH now confirmed that individuals would be required to undertake an oral examination that would be based on work undertaken via a report approved document/self-declaration.

RSPH confirmed that candidates would not be asked questions regarding different scenarios to assess the effective implementation of knowledge gained from the course. The Committee considered this to be a requirement of the viva process to verify the competence of the individual. HSE considered that given the issues and challenges of the operational work some element examining problem solving ability of each individual was desirable and more realistic than solely written assignment work.

- *Are any pre-requisites required before an individual can take the proposed course?*

RSPH/ATaC confirmed that these are:-

1. RSPH Level 3 qualifications in all of the following;
  - o Surveying
  - o Bulk Analysis
  - o Air Monitoring
  - o Dutyholder
2. BOHS S301 written exam – only until December 2015
3. W504 exam with Personal Learning Plan (PLP)
4. BOHS P modules P401 to P405

It is also possible to use a combination of the RSPH and BOHS qualifications as long as all the relevant disciplines are covered

- *Teachers and assessors/examiners: documented requirements?*

RSPH/ATaC confirmed that this would be presented.

- *Justification for the proposed qualification to be Level 4?*



Current analysts/surveyors are Level 3 under RSPH route and the proposed qualification is Level 4. Not clear whether the need for these attained Levels is defined for the purposes of competence to be demonstrated. Further review required.

## **8/ Survey Reporting (All)**

The Chair opened the discussion with referral to the previous minutes and the assessment tool which the HSE had previously used to assess report compliance. Committee agreed that this was a useful tool to have in place more widely. Agreement on how to disseminate and utilise it were not agreed at the meeting, but the HSE website would make it available to non-accredited as well as accredited organisations with inspection bodies.

Feedback given from TAs outside the Committee acknowledged a general trend for improvement in reporting but that scopes on refurbishments surveys were still bucking the trend with IBs failing to describe sufficiently the requirements of the work requested. Corrective Actions are being addressed on a visit by visit basis but not clear if this is achieving the desired effect on a wider scale

Asbestos Technical Bulletin (ATB) to be used as a tool to publish guidance on good practice. Internal meetings still being retained

## **9/ 4SC: Reporting of failures (GS)**

Numbers/Types of 4SC witnessed by Technical Assessors on assessments since 18<sup>th</sup> TAC Meet:

4SC x44:-

- AIB: 35 (~80%)
- Thermal Insulation: 4
- Debris: 4
- Textured Coating: 1

15 4SC of the 44 have been recorded as fails:-

- x6 at Stage 2 (40%);
- x7 at Stage 3 (47%);
- x2 at Stage 1 (13%)

However noted additionally that in a number of cases there is general cleaning at Stage 2 before going on to pass.

Cooperation of contractors was noted to have improved except for one incident involving a recent applicant laboratory aiming for accreditation in 4SC work. Noted by members that time for such shadowed audits does increase site time so can



understand why Contractor may refuse UKAS audit but this example was extreme in nature and not observed previously on any applicant laboratory.

Acknowledged that compared to previous period (prior to 18<sup>th</sup> TAC Meeting) the pass rate had improved. 4SC failure issue to be continued to be recorded by UKAS Technical Assessors and moving forward Laboratories will be required to keep similar records internally to support this process.

**AOB (SB):**

**1. UKAS Unannounced visit programme (WS)**

Being conducted in all Sections. Positive and no significant issues. 3 or 4 out of caseload being targeted by each AM. Therefore will conduct around 60 across Section in the year (not all asbestos)

Next Asbestos TAC 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting planned: 24<sup>th</sup> Feb -2016

END