



Attendees:

Sue Burbeck	Adams Environmental, (SB, Chair)
George Sanders	UKAS (GS)
Helen Ratcliffe,	Health & Safety Executive, Asbestos Policy Unit (HR)
Alan Willoughby	BOHS/FAAM (AW)
John Richards	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (JR)
Laurie Davies	Health & Safety Executive / Independent technical assessor, (LSTD)
Martin Gibson	Health & Safety Executive, HM Principal Specialist Inspector, (MG)
Louise Wainwright	UKAS (LW, Secretary)
Rob Bettinson	UKAS (RB) – attending to provide and update following Brexit
Jeff Ruddle	UKAS (JR) – attending to lead discussion on Modernisation of UKAS Assessments
Yasmine Daldas	UKAS (YD) – attending to lead discussion on Modernisation of UKAS Assessments

Apologies

Rob Blackburn	Asbestos Removal Contractors Association (RB - ARCA)
Jonathan Grant	NORAC (JG)
Arran Cobley	Hampshire County Council (AC)
Gerald Hudd	Independent Technical Assessor (GAH)
Colette Willoughby	British Occupational Hygiene Society (BOHS)/Independent Technical Assessor (CW)
Steve Platkiw	ATaC (SP)
Craig Bell	Health & Safety Executive (CB)

	Agenda item/Minutes	Lead
1	Welcome and Apologies	SB
Meeting Chaired by Sue Burbeck.		
The Chair welcomed all attendees to the 24th meeting of the UKAS Asbestos TAC meeting and included some opening comments and apologies.		
2	Minutes of the last meeting	SB
No changes/comments to final minutes from last meeting – agreed.		
3	UKAS Update (including where applicable): Changes in UKAS as applicable / Resource / Responsibilities / Applications, Resignations and Grants of accreditation/Schedules	GS
<p>April 2019 – Mark Bowen took on position as head of a new Commercial Directorate. Some changes to the aspects such as Training (Internal and External) and Marketing but none of the changes have had a direct effect on accreditation or visits themselves.</p> <p>Summer 2019 - Nick Gibbons joined UKAS as new Resource Manager.</p> <p>October 2019 - George Sanders took on new role of Senior Assessment Manager within AFLA, taking on a specialist role dealing with Asbestos within the section and will take a lead on Asbestos issues within UKAS.</p>		

Early 2020 - Restructuring within UKAS with the merging of the Enterprise section back into CORE. The Corporate section will remain the same. Management of asbestos is retained in the Agriculture, Food, Life Sciences and Asbestos Section (AFLA), but now includes the majority of all Asbestos cases (except those in Corporate).

Other changes within UKAS since the last meeting:

- Roll out of a new IT system which has been designed to facilitate the integration and roll out of a 'portal' system. This should assist with streamlining some of the processes between customers and UKAS.
- Implementation of a new Post Visit Assessment Team (PVAT) to assist and release assessors from some of the administrative tasks. This is to address some of the issues highlighted through customer feedback, including the turnaround times for evidence and processing of aspects such as Extension to scopes, particularly for organisations seeking new accreditation.
- Process for dealing with feedback is now changed. Where there is a score of 6/10 or below these are automatically raised as complaints and are investigated with the customer.

UKAS will explore viability of sending out the questionnaires via other parties with input from NORAC & ATaC as required.

Uniformity of approach/decision making re procedures/activities.

Agreement that all TAs should be working to the same standards, have the same attitude whether internal or external. Some attendees have quoted experiences of external TAs who have a particular target/interest during assessments. That said assessors present noted that a review of one item/process may lead to further investigation in that area – resulting in less time being spent on other activities etc. This may appear as bias but is in fact just a feature of an in-depth audit process and that assessments are sampling exercises.

UKAS would be interested to understand where this inconsistency is being raised For example, is it as a result of a change in assessors and where aspects were once perceived to be satisfactory and then have findings raised? If such instances are communicated to UKAS or raised at the time of the visits themselves, this allows for review by UKAS and in specific relation to the IB or Lab concerned.

Notes that UKAS already have a mechanism internally, during meetings for AMs, for the AMs to feedback any issues that have arisen with TAs or during assessments in general.

In addition, UKAS confirmed that the Operational Support Team within UKAS review site work every 3 years, and also review the assessments.

Resources

Resources have remained static for both internal and external assessors and at present there will always be a need for use of external assessors to provide flexibility and to support the resources within the sector.

Recruiting new Technical Assessors can prove difficult, particularly getting those who are suitably independent and not associated with existing labs or inspections bodies.

Applications, Resignations Grants of accreditation

2 applications only –1 was testing and inspection, not bulk, second application – no info.

3 resignations, partly in response to organisation take overs.

There are approximately 220 Asbestos customers - 110 both testing and inspection, 50 testing only, 50 inspection only. Approximately 70% testing labs do 4 SC.

Development projects (Completed/In Progress)

- Measurement of Dustiness (BS15051) - The first accreditation for this was gained some time ago and has now been passed over to AFLA to manage going forward.

To appreciate the market for this area of work the TAC have requested further details of what is covered by the accreditation is provided.

- Inspection of land for asbestos contamination

An expression of interest meeting with interested parties has been held by UKAS and this included representation from organisations involved in Contaminated Land. Proposals how to develop this have been put to members of the TAC during the meeting and discussed.

Without defined guidance there is concern by members that this could create much variation in approach. However, even without a standard method for accreditation purposes organisations can develop their own in-house method, which would require validation and be assessed on a case by case.

Concerns made to be taken back to the UKAS Development team for further possible options for progression.

Terms of Ref and other membership/stakeholders

UKAS is looking to update terms and review makeup of the group. In addition, representation at TAC may also need to be reviewed to ensure the group has the appropriate input from any new technical perspective where activities being accredited include wider technical areas e.g. inspection of contaminated land for asbestos and soils.

There was general consensus that the TAC meetings are useful.

4	HSE Update - Any organisation changes - Publications - General update	HR/MG/LD
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Organisation

The Housing Minister has confirmed the creation of a new Building Safety Regulator, to be initially set up within HSE. Comes on the back of the initial outcomes of the investigation into The Grenfell disaster.

The UK has now exited the EU but has a period of transition. Existing EU rules will still apply during this transition period but alongside any new created. There will be significant implications for the Chemical industry as Chemical Regs (REACH), as there will need to be UK equivalent by the end of the transition period. There also needs to be specific mechanism for the UK to set its own Workplace Exposure Limits as UK currently rely on EU.

A 'red tape' review is also required as a result of Brexit which is work the HSE will need to undertake and justify existing regulation e.g. HSE to defend Duty to Manage – potentially seen by some as 'gold plating'.

HSE have confirmed that there will still be work undertaken to look at asbestos licensing as is the case now but where these activities sit within the HSE going forward may be reviewed.

The impact of any changes on UKAS accreditation is likely to be minimal so long as the HSE expertise is not lost.

Publications

- HSG248 is now with publishers/editors and will then be passed on for review by Publications Governance Group (PGG)
- The Analyst inspection project report is also now published and available from the resources section on the HSE website - <https://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/assets/docs/asbestos-analysts-project-report-2015.pdf>
- The report on Asbestos in marble is also now published: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/am1.pdf>

General

Impact of Coronavirus outbreak – There are some H&S impacts but the HSE will advise as when needed.

5	Qualifications Update: - Syllabus changes, - Exam performance - Candidate numbers - Planned changes	ATaC/BOHS
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ATaC – A representative could not attend and no update was available for meeting

BOHS – summary provided prior to meeting additional update provided by BOHS representative during meeting

FAAM

Asbestos 2019 the FAAM Conference was held in Nottingham in November 2019 over 2 days with a personal development course (PDC) held the day before. The PDC was on retrospective risk assessments and looked at various risk models to establish the level of risk based on potential exposures. The PDC and Conference were both well attended.

FAAM membership requires members to participate in CPD so is a good way of monitoring individuals and their on-going development. CPD participation is also audited.

FAAM is now coming into its 3rd year and has seen membership growth year on year. At the end of December 2019, it stood at 348 members which was an increase of 14% from the previous year.

Qualifications

The P408, Identification and Quantification of asbestos in soils has now been running for almost 18 months and has been well received.

The P407 has now been replaced by the D407. It has been moved out of the P series into a new suite of duty holder modules which are designated with a 'D'. The duty holder focus has been further enhanced with additional emphasis on the management plan.

There are two further D Modules in the pipeline which are currently being piloted and updates will be provided in due course. All other P400 series modules are continuing as normal.

6	Stakeholder Updates	
Nothing else to add under this agenda item		
7	UKAS: Status as UK National Accreditation Body (NAB), impact of Brexit on our status, update on PJLA: Potential impact(s) on asbestos IBs/Testing CABs	RB
<p>UKAS: Status as UK National Accreditation Body (NAB), impact of Brexit on our status, update on PJLA: Potential impact(s) on asbestos IBs/Testing CABs</p> <p>As of 31st Jan 2020 UK, is no longer part of EU.</p> <p>The Secretary of state, Lord Henley however has formally confirmed that UKAS will be retained as the national accreditation body. IBs and Labs accreditation status remains in place with no changes as a result of Brexit.</p> <p>UKAS has also met with HSE to confirm ongoing status going forward and in line with Government policy, HSE only recognises UKAS accreditation of asbestos analysts and surveyors.</p> <p>If therefore a duty holder used a service provider who was not UKAS accredited, (for testing) they would be in breach of regulations. Also, if an organisation sought accreditation by another accreditation provider, then this wouldn't be recognised by the HSE and would be in breach of the regulations.</p> <p>Multilateral agreement remains in place as the UK is still a member of the EA. Currently the UK remains a member of EA, (although now within a 2-year transition to come out of it) and also ILAC, as a signature to the Multilateral Agreements (MLA). UKAS accreditation retains global recognition regardless of EA status.</p> <p>UKAS are peer evaluated by EA and the EA in turn are evaluated by ILAC. If UK left the EA the ILAC would take on this evaluation.</p>		

Ultimately, UKAS aims that bodies would wish to come to UKAS for accreditation rather than because they have no other option although it appreciates that in Asbestos, where accreditation is mandatory under Regulation, it is the sole provider.

HSE have added a page to their website <https://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/analysts-surveyors.htm> - this also stipulate that the recognition only of accreditation by UKAS.

8	UKAS: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modernising UKAS Assessments: Risk-based approach	JR/YD
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UKAS is looking to use the Asbestos sector and its customers during the initial discussions and the development of this project.

This area of work is looking at risks in regard to the assessments undertaken by UKAS, looking at aspects such as the approaches used and the frequency of assessment etc.

Reason for process is due to an update to the standard against which UKAS is assessed (ISO/IEC 17011:2017).

There are other National Accreditation Bodies already developing similar approaches. A number of potential risk factors were discussed during the meeting.

UKAS will be looking at running a pilot in the financial year of 2021-2022

9	Definitions of soils, ballast slurries etc and UKAS schedules	HSE/UKAS
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Definitions of soils, ballast slurries etc and UKAS schedules

Review is required in relation to soils accreditation (identification and quantification) and the definitions in use.

Currently the types of samples appearing schedules of accreditation is not defined anywhere and a number of descriptors has increased but without any clear consensus of what the definition of each is e.g. sediments, slurries etc.

General consensus that a small working group would be of value to try and help to drive this through review and completion.

Essentially, Labs shouldn't be analysing any samples which aren't specified within their scope of accreditation and this relies on appropriate and robust contract review. On the back of this laboratories should determine what samples they are dealing with and whether their scope of works permits analysis under accreditation.

10	UKAS position on 5% QC (Inspection resurveys)	All
No time to discuss this aspect – carried forward to next meeting		
11	Implementation of revised HSG248	All
<p><u>Implementation of revised HSG248</u></p> <p>The implementation strategy largely depends on the changes in the document and the risks associated with this.</p> <p>Possible routes have been discussed during the meeting and further discussion will be required. Once proposals have been drafted UKAS will require further input from the TAC prior to communications to UKAS customers.</p> <p>The approach will ultimately depend on the risk to accreditation that the changes bring and will need to consider if site activities need to be part of this process.</p> <p>It is envisaged that all Labs wishing to transition to the revised version of HSG248 would gain such recognition from the same date, so avoiding claims of unfair commercial advantage.</p>		
12	AOB	All
<p>AOB</p> <p>Time to discuss point a) was not available and so this is to be moved to next meeting -</p> <p>a) EA requirements for labs receiving, storing and disposing of asbestos samples. This has come to light during discussions with EA about diverting asbestos "waste" to make PT samples.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">i. Samples must be consigned to laboratoriesii. Labs need to keep auditable recordsiii. Labs need to submit quarterly consignee returnsiv. Labs will need to hold a suitable authorisation (e.g. environmental permit or exemption) <p>b) The scope for new technology in the asbestos industry</p> <p>There are a number of potential new technologies being developed and some examples of these were discussed during the meeting. Examples if these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• equipment which uses AI to count air testing samples• equipment which aims to provide results to confirm the presence of asbestos within materials during a survey• use of drones for inspection/four stage clearance inspections <p>A topic group has been set within the HSE for looking at the use of Artificial Intelligence as an area and some of the examples above re being reviewed currently.</p>		



Regardless of the item/product being developed there would have to be lots of validation alongside existing methods and demonstration that the item/products are fit for purpose and still comply under relevant parts of the standards for accreditation.

c) Quality of Inspection Reports

This is still an area of concern by TAC members and in particular end users being able to interpret the reports being issued by IBs. Reporting is an area reviewed during assessments but there is still huge scope for Inspection bodies to present information differently.

IBs should consider the reporting of surveys as part of their contract review procedures to ensure that the client's instructions for the survey and report are known. IBs should also have quality assurance processes which include thorough checks that the client's requirements have been met, as well as checks on the consistency, technical accuracy and completeness of the reports.

13 Close

All

Date of next meeting – TBC, likely Sept 2020.