Description of the RICE Scheme

Participation in an independent proficiency-testing scheme plays an essential part of a laboratory's quality control system and is mandatory for a laboratory accredited to the ISO 17025 standard. RICE is an asbestos fibre counting proficiency-testing scheme run by the Health & Safety Laboratory on behalf of HSE's Committee on Fibre Measurement (CFM). CFM includes representatives from HSE, UKAS, industry, analytical laboratories and other independent experts. A steering group within CFM, the Fibre Proficiency Testing Steering Committee (FPTSC), oversees the technical operation and development of RICE and the Asbestos In Materials Scheme (AIMS).
The RICE scheme provides a measure of the laboratory's performance in relation to other fibre counting laboratories. The recommended analytical method for this scheme is the World Health Organisation (WHO) counting rules using phase contrast microscopy.

Laboratories that are not accredited to ISO 17025 by the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) undertaking fibre counting are required by the Irish Health and Safety Authority (HSA) to maintain an acceptable performance in the RICE scheme.

Significance and interpretation of the Indicators of Participant Counting

A laboratory will receive one of four classifications – Category 1, Category 2, Category 3 or Awaiting Classification – for each period covered by four consecutive rounds.

Category 1 is Good
Category 2 is Acceptable (but needs improvement)
Category 3 is Unsatisfactory and Awaiting Classification is assigned when fewer than four rounds have been completed.

This 4 round classification is the primary assessment measure because it reflects the performance of a laboratory over a period of time; this reduces the influence of slide-related variations. The aim of every laboratory should be to achieve and maintain a Category 1 performance in RICE.

This report lists those laboratories that have achieved either Category 1 or Category 2 status. Laboratories are listed in alphabetical order.

Please note that laboratories "Awaiting Classification" and Category 3 laboratories are not included in this list.

Category 1 (Good)

ASTC Ltd

Hollytree House, Mullinabro Woods, Waterford, X91PK7Y Republic of Ireland

Celtic Asbestos Consultancy Ltd

Unit 60, Grange Way, Baldoyle Industrial Estate, Baldoyle, Dublin, D13 F8F5 Republic of Ireland

Electricity Supply Board

Pigeon House Road, Ringsend, Dublin 4, D04XD82 Republic of Ireland

McCusker Environmental Ltd

6 Arbutus Grove, Quin, Ennis, Co. Clare, V95E6C3 Republic of Ireland

OHSS Ltd

5C Fingal Bay Business Park, Harry Reynold's Road, Balbriggan Co., Dublin, K32 XT04 Republic of Ireland

Phoenix Environmental Safety Ltd

Graigueswood, Freshford, Co. Kilkenny, R95 KW60 Republic of Ireland

Category 2 (Acceptable but needs improvement)

About Safety Ltd

24 Ocean Crest, Abbeylands, Arklow, Co Wicklow, Y14W658 Republic of Ireland

MDK Analytical Ltd

Unit 1A , Eastlink Business Park, Carrigtwohill, Cork, Cork, T45Y381 Ireland