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, HSL, 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.
About Safety Ltd
24 Ocean Crest
Abbeylands
Arklow
County Wicklow
Ireland
Y14 W65

Category 2 – Acceptable (but needs improvement)

ASTC Ltd
Hollytree House
Mullinabro Woods
Waterford
Ireland

Category 2 – Acceptable (but needs improvement)

Celtic Asbestos Consultancy Ltd
Unit 62 Grange Close
Baldoyle Industrial Estate
Baldoyle
Dublin
D13 F8F5

Category 2 – Acceptable (but needs improvement)

McCusker Environmental Ltd
6 Arbutus Grove
Quin
Ennis
Co. Clare
Ireland

Category 1 – Good

MDK Analytical
Carrigtwohill Business Centre
Carrigtwohill
Co. Cork
Ireland

Category 1 – Good

Occupational Hygiene & Safety Services Ltd
Unit 2 Beat Centre
Stephenstown Industrial Estate
Balbriggan
Co. Dublin
Ireland

Category 1 – Good

Phoenix Environmental Safety Limited
Graigueswood
Freshford
Co. Kilkenny
Ireland

Category 1 – Good