

# ASBESTOS IN MATERIALS SCHEME FOR PROFICIENCY TESTING:

- Operated by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE);
- Comprehensive range of test materials of commercially available asbestos containing materials (ACMs) and HSE produced materials;
- Independent assessment of measurement quality;
- Accredited by UKAS to ISO 17043;
- Suitable for all laboratories involved in the identification of asbestos in bulk materials



## Purpose of AIMS

- Promote quality and comparability in the identification of asbestos in bulk materials;
- Help laboratories monitor and improve the quality of their analytical measurements;
- Enable laboratories to demonstrate competence with respect to measurement and regulatory standards;
- Provide information to participants on technical issues and methodologies related to the identification of asbestos.

## Benefits of AIMS participation

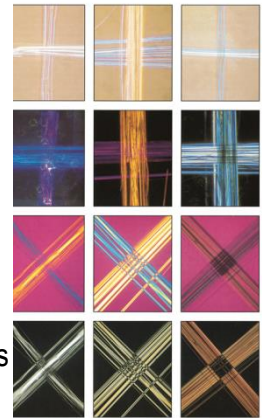
- Provides laboratories with a mechanism to compare their measurements with others in the industry worldwide;
- Enables laboratories to demonstrate the quality of their results to third parties, e.g. customers, regulators and accreditation bodies;
- Facilitates the monitoring of trends, over time, in the quality of measurements;
- Helps and educates laboratory staff and their customers.

## AIMS Operation

The scheme year operates from April to March, with test materials distributed to participants three times during this period. Distribution dates are detailed on the AIMS schedule.

Test materials reflect typical asbestos containing materials used in buildings throughout the world. From time to time more unusual artificial samples and naturally occurring industrial minerals will be included.

Test materials may contain up to three different asbestos types or no asbestos at all. Over the course of several rounds, all six asbestos types will be included. A range of non-asbestos fibres may also be included.



A representative sub-set of all test materials is fully validated against detailed criteria before introduction into the AIMS scheme. Where appropriate, the validation laboratories are accredited to ISO 17025 for the identification of asbestos in bulk materials.

The recommended method for the scheme is polarised light microscopy with dispersion staining microscopy as described in HSE guidance document HSG 248. However, any equivalent or comparable method can be used. Participants obtain a round and three round cumulative score. The cumulative score indicates satisfactory or unsatisfactory performance.

For a comprehensive overview of the scheme please refer to the AIMS Information Book for Participants available on our website: [www.hsl.gov.uk/proficiency-testing-schemes](http://www.hsl.gov.uk/proficiency-testing-schemes)

## Reporting

Participant results for the AIMS scheme are submitted through the Proficiency Testing Online Data Entry System. A unique user name, password and web link will be provided on registration.

Participants' individual results are available online approximately 10 working days after the reporting deadline. A group report for each round is posted on the website.

The scheme is fully confidential as participants only have access to their own results via the Proficiency Testing Online Data Entry System.

### For further information contact:

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