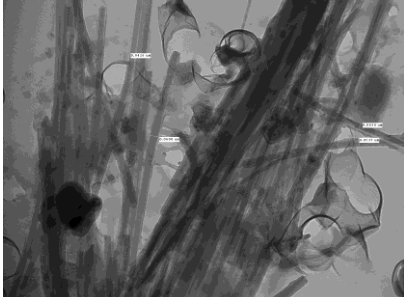




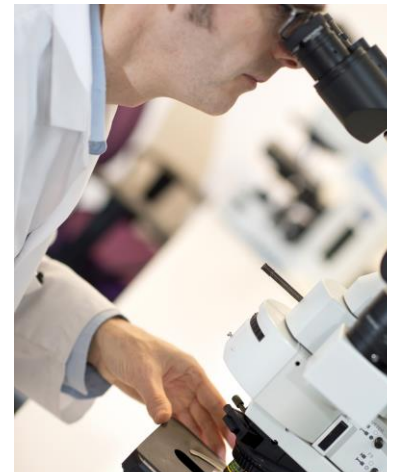
Low Asbestos Content Scheme:



- LACS replaces the AIMS TEM Scheme
- The scheme is suitable for all laboratories involved in the identification and quantification of asbestos at low concentrations;
- Managed and run by the Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL);
- Includes a comprehensive range of HSL produced materials;
- Asbestos content in the range 0.01 – 0.1%

Purpose of LACS

- To promote quality and comparability in the detection and quantification of asbestos in solids and powders;
- To help laboratories monitor and improve the quality of their asbestos measurements
- To enable laboratories to demonstrate competence with respect to regulatory standards
- To provide information to participants on technical issues and methodologies related to the measurement of asbestos



Benefits of LACS 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.



LACS Operation

The LACS year operates from April to March and test materials are distributed to participants quarterly with distribution dates detailed in the LACS schedule. These are normally in-line with distribution dates for AIMS.

The test materials used in the scheme are all manufactured in the laboratory and do **not** necessarily reflect typical asbestos containing materials used in buildings. Also, whilst the six regulated asbestos types will be included, it is not anticipated that all six will be used every year and laboratories should not rely on LACS to demonstrate analytical competence in the identification of the six regulated asbestos types. From time to time more unusual samples and naturally occurring industrial minerals will be included.

Test materials may contain up to three different asbestos types or no asbestos at all. A range of non-asbestos fibres may also be included. Each sample is individually manufactured by careful weighing and mixing of the asbestos component(s) and matrix material.

A representative sub-set of all test materials is fully validated against detailed criteria before introduction into LACS. The validation laboratories are normally accredited to ISO 17025 for the measurement of asbestos in bulk materials.

There is no recommended method for LACS although the low asbestos content suggests many laboratories will use electron microscopy techniques. However, in order to ensure detection of all asbestos types present, it is strongly recommended that the sample is analysed in its entirety.

Participants obtain a round score for the qualitative assessment (identification of asbestos types present) and a Z-score for the quantitative assessment.

For a comprehensive overview of the scheme please refer to the LACS Information Book for Participants, available to download from HSL website: www.hsl.gov.uk

Reporting

Participant results for LACS are submitted through HSL's 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 HSL website.

The scheme is fully confidential as participants only have access to their own results via HSL's online data entry system.

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