**Issue: HSG248 Asbestos: The Analysts’ Guide (2nd Edition) – HSE proposal to change the points allocation applied to samples with no asbestos detected (Table A2.10) in response to concerns and proposals from industry raised through the UKAS TAC.**

The table overleaf is a proposed revision of *Table A2.10 Maximum numbers of samples of each type that can be analysed in a 24-hour period by a single analyst before implementing additional quality checks*. The text highlighted in yellow is new following the July 23 meeting.

Unlike the current version, the table now includes non-asbestos-containing materials which would be reported as ‘no asbestos detected’ (NAD). HSG248 (2nd Edition) currently considers all NAD samples to be more difficult to analyse and so placed in Category B and assigned 2 points. However, it is acknowledged the wording in HSG248 states ‘samples where no asbestos is detected usually take longer to analyse’. **To this end, it is proposed to assign some specific NAD material types to Category A (1 point) or Category B (2 points) based on their inherent properties**.

A number of the proposals submitted by Bulk Analysis Laboratories indicate that many analysts already make an informed judgement as to the type of material they are analysing through a combination of experience, information provided by the surveyor and initial visual examination. This will allow them to assign the material (whether it turns out to be asbestos or not) to either Category A or B at the start of analysis, with Category B being the default where it is unidentifiable.

HSE propose **no change** to the ‘around 10-minute’ search time (and 5 mins for pinch samples) which has been guidance since 2005. However, it is recognised that the requirement to record start and finish times is a more rigid application of this guidance which will be subject to UKAS audit (previously analyst judgement was applied as to when to stop searching). **Start and finish times would still need to be recorded but could now be compared to the Category A and B analysis time ranges proposed in the revised Table A2.10.**

HSE propose **no change** to the requirement to include Quality Control (QC) checks in the points total or the absolute maximum metrics of 60 samples or 70 points.

**Table A2.10 Maximum numbers of samples of each type that can be analysed in a 24-hour period by a single analyst before implementing additional quality checks.**

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| --- | --- |
| **Type of Material** | **Maximum number of samples per 24 hours for an analyst before additional QC applies. Explanatory notes added.** |
| **Category A – 1 point** \* **(never less than 5 mins spent on microscope examination of sample)** | **40**  These types of materials will generally not need extensive time spent on analysis due to any of the following:   * High percentage of asbestos content * Few or no non-asbestos fibres present in matrix * Visibility of (size) of the asbestos fibres * Use of ignition to burn the fibres ruling out asbestos presence |
| Asbestos Cement products |
| Asbestos Insulating Board |
| Floor tiles (thermoplastic) |
| Bituminous products (e.g roofing felt, damp-proof courses, mastics, glues) |
| Lagging (preformed/friable) |
| Sprayed and loose fill asbestos |
| Textiles and gaskets |
| \*\*Normally non-asbestos construction materials  Examples of these materials would be:   * Concrete (incl concrete breeze block) with no associated debris * Cement products (‘NT’ New Technology) * Solid wood/timber with no associated debris / contamination * Wood chipboard with no associated debris / contamination * Plywood (timber veneers) with no associated debris * Rigid thermoset insulation board   This list is not exhaustive, analysts will be expected to make a risk-based judgement to ensure sufficient time is spent on microscope examination of the sample and therefore which Category to assign. |
| **Category B – 2 points** \* **(never less than 10 mins spent on microscope examination of sample)** | **20**  Analysis of these materials will take longer due to the:   * low percentage of asbestos which they contain * fineness of the asbestos fibres * presence of non-asbestos fibres in the matrix * the number of layers that have to be individually pinch tested * possible presence of asbestos contamination * need for sample preparation techniques to be applied |
| Hard-set lagging |
| Decorative plasters/textured coatings/paints |
| Vinyl floor tiles |
| Soils |
| Asbestos impurities in mineral products |
| Loose debris/dust/ debris associated with other materials/unidentifiable products |
| Resins and plastics |
| Multi-layered or complex products eg fire retardant paint, core samples, floor coverings with adhesive / screed, electrical fuse guards |
| Insulating boards including: Fibre-cement boards, Fibreboards with paper coating, calcium silicate board reinforced with fibres, micaceous insulating boards |
| **Notes: These notes would replace the notes for A2.10 table currently in HSG248**  \*Minimum analysis time applies only when no asbestos is detected.  \*\*Do not require sample preparation unless presence of asbestos suspected.  All samples analysed must be assigned to a category, with Category B scoring being the default where there is any doubt, i.e. as a worst case approach.  It is expected that where a material has, or is likely to have, multiple asbestos types, then sufficient time is taken to identify all types present to ensure that material risk assessments are accurate for dutyholders. | |