

ACAD Personal Monitoring Guidance

PM results are the only quantitative method for measuring an individual's performance in the asbestos sector and should therefore be proactively monitored.

Personal Monitoring Strategy

In addition to the selection of RPE and exposure monitoring requirements of legislation, the objectives of a Personal Monitoring (PM) strategy include ensuring sufficient accurate information is available to:

1. Record accurate cumulative exposure of employees (Fibre-hours)
2. Identify trends and values higher or lower than anticipated (Good/less good practice)
3. Benchmark employees (Individual vs company average)

This should also allow for the differentiation between ACMs being worked on with differing:

- Removal method and controls used (eg Scrape with spraying)
- Condition & surface treatment (eg Poor condition, unsealed)
- Fixing (eg Nailed, screwed, glued)
- Phase of work (eg Set up, removal, fine clean, de-tenting)

This is achieved by undertaking PM on all employees across all tasks they undertake during their employment.

Minimum Standards for air tests

Feedback from ACAD members suggests the following minimum standards generate more meaningful PM data:

1. 200 fields counted (subject to WHO counting rules)
2. Minimum 100l, preferably 240l sample volume

Based on a flow rate of 1 litre/minute, to obtain larger volumes necessitates a longer duration however tasks may vary during the period of the air test. In these circumstances additional information should be gathered detailing the 2nd (or 3rd) activity undertaken for that individual air test result. Ideally this situation should be avoided as much as possible as the usefulness of the data is limited by the variation it covers.

Existing data

You should review your existing data held for existing employees to identify any significant gaps from your previous monitoring strategy.

Where possible existing data should be used and built upon however the existing data may not meet the suggested criteria above or contain the level of detail limiting its usefulness.

Percentages for monitoring

Historic advice varied around percentages based on perceived risk from a particular ACM so sprayed coatings were monitored 100% of the time with AIB monitored 25% to 33% of the time. With this blunt approach PM might just record levels for screw fixed AIB ceiling tile removal which would provide an artificially lower level than perhaps glued AIB boxing.

By considering the range of different tasks each employee undertakes on the full variety of ACMs you encounter you quickly produce a simple matrix for an individual showing the full extent of situations requiring monitoring data. The collection of this initial data will clearly be a long term goal, and in most circumstances will span more than a single license period.

Some activities will be lower risk (preparing to remove floor tiles) and some much higher (controlled breakage of AIB to facilitate removal). You should focus your resources to obtain meaningful data for the higher risk activities using any previous data held where an employee has not been individually monitored.

Percentages should start off as high as reasonably practicable when an organisation is gathering their initial data. Once the initial data is in place the frequency of monitoring should be based on your findings:

- Individuals with higher than average values should be monitored more frequently. This should include closer supervision to identify any gaps in competence that are contributing to their higher result
- Individuals with lower than average values should be monitored less frequently. How they work should be assessed to identify any good practice that can be shared
- Higher risk activities should be monitored more frequently than lower risk activities
- Any new or unique situations should be monitored

A minimum percentage often talked about for monitoring types of work is 25% however this should be treated with caution and not used as an absolute minimum, more an aspirational target. The initial assessment and PM results should determine the minimum level of monitoring as it compares with any previous similar work activity. It may include a simple 'check' to ensure fibre release is comparable and acceptable in relation to previous measurements or determine a formal monitoring programme should be implemented.

Plan of Work

Your Plan of Work will detail your air monitoring strategy and this should include details of PM strategy. This should state which individual(s) will be monitored for which task(s) as part of your proactive approach to PM. Where PM is deemed not necessary for a particular project you should reference where you have obtained your figures and justify your rationale of not undertaking PM. This document can then readily be stored electronically alongside analyst paperwork to provide key contract information to support any future analysis of an individual's exposure.

Where an analyst is client appointed, you should engage with the client and encourage them to specify the minimum standards contained in this guidance.

Electronic Record Keeping

The complexity of the information required for a robust PM strategy necessitates the usage of a spreadsheet or database system. This should allow for individual reports to assist compiling an individual's training needs as well as informing them in an accessible format the extent of their exposure and how it compares to the company average. It should also allow for detailed analysis to identify trends and highs/lows for the company.

Data Protection

Always be aware of and compliant with data protection requirements when storing any personal information.