Asbestos Network – Discussion Topics

**Online worker training - Asbestos Training and Face Fits**

The HSE are currently investigating the supply of certification for both training and face fits to the asbestos industry. There are “certificates without substance” in circulation and the HSE are investigating with a view to acting on their findings.

The consensus was that online training, including refresher courses, can be suitable for experienced workers if supported by the employer's Training Needs Analysis.

However, it was agreed that hands-on practical training remains essential for new operatives and when training needs dictate.

**Face fit testing standards.**

While fit-to-fit tester accreditation is strongly encouraged, it is not currently mandatory as long as competency is demonstrated. The HSE will be providing further guidance on this topic, including possible new recommendations for documenting facial hair during fit tests.

The meeting highlighted a clear need and appetite for our industry to strengthen overall training and competency assurance standards, potentially through the design of an updated framework. This would require input and collaboration from all key stakeholders.

ACAD will continue to actively participate in these discussions and keep members informed of any developments. We remain committed to working with the HSE and other industry partners to address these issues and drive positive change in our sector.

**Industry Supplies**

**Waste Bags**

We currently have a discussion on the Asbestos Network Committee about asbestos waste bags. Covered in the Asbestos Network Licensing Working Group update

**Type 3 Category 5-6 Overalls** – Not all overalls are the same, industry suppliers are bringing substandard products to the attention of the HSE at the Asbestos Network technical working group

**1000 gauge Polythene** – Thermac introduced an 800 gauge polythene with advanced polymers that allowed the material to perform better than the current 1000 gauge materials

**Science Division - Asbestos Surveying** – Survey was sent out, this will be reviewed by summer 24, leading on to Science division asking for volunteer companies both accredited for surveying and not accredited to carry out surveys reviewed by the Science Division to see if there is a difference between the two.

**Occupational Exposure Standard dropped across Europe –**

The new Directive (EU) 2023/2668, amending the previous Directive 2009/148/EC, was adopted on 22 November 2023, focusing on enhancing the safety and health of workers handling asbestos in various sectors.

Stricter Exposure Limits:

The Directive introduces revised occupational exposure limit values, reflecting the latest scientific evidence. By 2029, employers must ensure that no worker is exposed to airborne asbestos concentration exceeding 0.002 fibres per cm3, the new limit is 50 times lower than the current exposure limit of 100,000 fibres/m³