

Materials Characterisation

Summary of the 4th Accreditation Advisory Committee Meeting

The 4th meeting of the Materials Characterisation (MC) Accreditation Advisory Committee was held in-person at the NATA offices in Melbourne on the 31st of May 2023.

Review of current membership and composition

The Committee discussed the breadth of testing covered by the current membership and future requirements for additional expertise. An Expression OF Interest (EOI) was published seeking applicants with experience in coal testing and a suitable candidate has yet to be identified.

Reports from members

The Committee discussed the varied application and understanding of measurement uncertainty, proficiency testing requirements and validity in certain areas. The potential for an increasing demand for analysis of hydrogen and car engine exhaust was noted.

Review of relevant Accreditation Criteria

The current Criteria and Guidance documents applicable to MC were reviewed. The Committee is finalising the review of the current suite of documents; once all comments and suggested amendments been incorporated revised documents will be circulated for public comment before publication. The Guidance document relating to the use of handheld, portable analysis (such as PMI XRF units) - *Specific Accreditation Guidance - Materials - Characterisation of Metallic Items by X-ray Fluorescence and Atomic Emission Techniques* - is currently being redrafted as Criteria, and will be circulated for public comment in due course.

Review of Scope of Accreditation descriptors

The Committee noted the current list of service descriptors and discussed the addition of scope lines for analysis of organic compound using quantitative nuclear magnetic resonance (qNMR) and for material performance of absorbents such as those used in double glazed windows.

Stakeholder engagement

Several laboratory forums have been held for facility engagement and information on the NCC changes to low lead content brass alloys in plumbing products. NATA has also been involved with several meetings regarding critical minerals' future, control, supply and use, and the testing undertaken at each stage of use.

Assessors

The Committee discussed Technical Assessor usage, identification of disciplines requiring recruitment, new appointments, retirements, training programs and needs. Difficulty finding new assessors was noted as an increasing concern.

The next full meeting is tentatively set for the 4th quarter of 2024.