

## Geotechnical and Civil Construction Materials Testing

### Summary of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Accreditation Advisory Committee Meeting

This meeting took place on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at NATA, Level 2, 2–6 Railway Parade, Camberwell.

#### Committee membership

Since the last meeting in May 2023

- Terms for two members expire in December 2025; expressions of interest have been sought.
- Membership of this committee is considered sufficient to address competencies in GCCMT.

#### Reports from members

- The Committee requested that NATA hold a webinar for Technical Assessors on shrink–swell index and hydrometer testing once the revised AS 1289.7.1.1 is published.
- Integrity risks associated with AI-generated datasets and the limitations of current digital assessment tools were highlighted for ongoing engagement with State road agencies, noting that NATA's role is to assess facility competence and not to police ethical behaviour.
- Concerns about facilities relying on toolbox talks to correct recurring competency nonconformances were noted.

#### Stakeholder engagement

- Changes in state-based industry associations were noted, including the closure of AGTA in Queensland. Funds that AGTA provided to NATA upon its closure were used to support free internal audit training for construction laboratories in Queensland.
- A workshop with building regulators, road agencies and Standards Australia was confirmed for November to explore systemic concrete sampling, transport and curing issues.

#### Service descriptors (scope) and criteria

- The Committee agreed that the NATA Specific Accreditation Guidance “Measurement Uncertainty in Geotechnical Testing” is to be withdrawn, as more authoritative references are available; this has since been removed from the NATA website.
- The updated Geotechnical and Civil Construction Annex specific accreditation criteria was finalised, due for publication in October, and coming into effect from December 2025; this is now available on the NATA website.
- The GCCMT Services, used to describe testing on facility scopes and to match Technical Assessor competencies for assessments, were considered sufficiently granular.
- The status of withdrawn and unsupported Australian Airports Association methods (AAA MT001 and MT002) was reviewed. NATA will contact facilities with these

methods on their scopes. In the absence of current contracts requiring these specific methods, they are anticipated to be withdrawn from scopes.

Miscellaneous discussion

- Expectations were clearly stated that facilities must be genuinely assessment-ready before visits are arranged, particularly for new accreditations and scope extensions.
- Subcontracting for sampling, slump testing and specimen manufacture was discussed, including the need for clear reporting where independently accredited subcontractors are used, or for the contracting facility to assume full responsibility for competence and quality assurance where work is presented as its own.
- Proficiency testing and comparison activities were discussed, emphasising the importance of suitably challenging samples, careful interpretation of limited data and context-appropriate acceptance criteria.
- Measures to support lead and technical assessor safety were noted, including psychosocial support in the follow-up from difficult assessments. Compliance with facility PPE requirements, particularly regarding respiratory protection for crystalline silica, was considered to be very important to the health and safety of assessment teams.

The next meeting is scheduled for the first quarter of 2027.