

How the Source Testing Association came to be

Here we take a look at how the Source Testing Association has evolved over the past 14 years into the committed body of more than 220 member companies that it is today

The Source Testing Association (STA) was established in 1995 and was set up as a non-profit making organisation serving the emission monitoring industry. Over the years it has built up to a corporate membership of over 220 companies, drawn from process operators, regulators, equipment suppliers and test laboratories with increasing interest from overseas companies.

Membership is open to any company that has an interest in emission monitoring. The membership covers all employees within the company.

The STA is committed to the advancement of the science and practice of emission monitoring and to develop and maintain a high quality of service to customers. Its aims and objectives are to:

- Contribute to the development of industry standards, codes, safety procedures and operating principles
- Encourage the personal and professional development of practicing source testers and students
- Maintain a body of current sampling knowledge
- Assist in maintenance of a high level of ethical conduct
- Seek co-operative endeavours with other professional organisations, institutions and regulatory bodies, nationally and internationally, that are engaged in source emissions testing

The Association offers a package of benefits to its members which includes:

- Technical advice relating to emission monitoring
- Conference and exhibition opportunities
- Seminars and training on a variety of related activities
- Representation on national, European and international standards organisations
- Training in relation to many aspects of emission monitoring
- Liaison with regulators, UK and International, many of whom are members.

Meanwhile, clients can be assured that members will offer:

- The most appropriate protocols and methods
- Sampling and analysis equipment that is fit for purpose
- Qualified and suitably experienced personnel

Structure

The STA membership elects, every two years, officers that take responsibility of the various task groups within the STA. The current task groups and officers are as follows:

- Stack Emission Monitoring (quality and technical) — chairman, Rod Robinson, NPL (quality)/ Ray Pullen, Envirocare (technical)
- Process Operators' Task Group — chairman, David Graham, EON UK
- Health and Safety Task Group — chairman, Alan Lloyd, Industrial Air Monitoring Consultants
- Equipment Suppliers and EN14181 Task Groups — chairman, William



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Averdieck, PCME

- Training Task Group — chairman, Simon Medhurst, Smedstock Environmental
- Small Business Task Group — chairman, Paul Mudway, Mudway Health, Safety & Environment

Each task group meets at various times during the year to discuss issues and provide guidance. The function of each group is as follows:

Stack Emission Monitoring

Technical task group

The Technical Task Group holds combined meetings with the Quality Task Group four times a year at the STA offices in Hitchin, Hertfordshire. Any member company can send as many representatives as they wish to these meetings and attendances continue to increase because of the continuing success the groups have in addressing and resolving issues raised by the membership. Stack sampling specialists from the Environment Agency and UKAS attend every meeting, enabling frank and fruitful discussions on a range of topics such as methodologies, standards, permitting and equipment.

Whenever it is requested by the membership, specific technical guidance is written and can be found in the members' area of the website. There are currently 37 documents covering topics such as testing incinerators, calculating delta H, chemical resistance data, and oxygen correction on WID related processes.

BSI consults the STA where new national or international standards for stack sampling are being developed and reviewed. At the very least the members of the Task Group are given the opportunity to comment at the draft stage. Often

the STA sends representatives to the meetings and sometimes organises and runs the committees.

Technical Transfer Seminars are organised on pertinent topics. They are always well attended.

Quality task group

The Quality Task Group holds combined meetings with the Technical Task Group four times a year at the STA offices. The joint meetings cover a wide range of topics of interest to the stack testing community and active participation is welcomed. The Quality Task Group specifically addresses those issues relating to improving the value and reliability of the results we provide to our customers as stack testers. The topics routinely discussed include proficiency testing (PT) schemes, relevant CEN standards and Environment Agency Method Implementation Documents (MIDs), EN 14181 guidance, calibration techniques and the availability of calibration gases. In addition to a large number of stack testing companies, UKAS, Environment Agency, process operators and gas supply companies also attend the meetings, enabling issues and topics raised by members to be addressed in the meetings.

The Quality Task Group is active in producing guidance for members, including the STA guide to the calculation of uncertainty, and the example uncertainty calculation spreadsheets. Members also have the opportunity to provide input to Environment Agency guidance and CEN and ISO standards. Technical Transfer Seminars are organised on specific topics, including the perennial favourite — uncertainty.

In addition, the Quality and Technical groups also undertake specific projects, often with Environment Agency or DIUS support, to investigate particular issues relating to stack testing methods. Recent examples have included studies into particulate monitoring at very low dust concentrations, which led to the publication of new Environment Agency guidance, and the validation of the Environment Agency's SO₂ instrument method (M21) as a potential alternative reference method to the CEN manual method. We also have an FTIR interest group, which is currently developing a method for FTIR measurements. This will become an Environment Agency guidance document and subsequently may be proposed as a CEN standard method.

Process Operators Task Group

The Process Operators' Task Group generally meets twice a year to review developments in legislation and standards and to share practical experience of continuous monitoring, quality assurance and related issues, such as permitting and reporting. Process operator representation within the STA is high and attendance at meetings is increasing as we combine these with site visits to members' premises.

In our forthcoming programme, we plan to have presentations on specific topics of relevance to operators, including: the provision of safe access

to sampling locations; demonstrating representativeness of the monitoring location and the Environment Agency's Operator Monitoring and Assessment scheme.

Health & Safety Task Group

The safety of those undertaking stack emission monitoring has always been a driving force within the Source Testing Association and the Health and Safety Task Group is the focus of this work. Since its inception those involved in this group have strived to produce guidance to the industry on safe working practices and the implementation of safety legislation.

One of the most recognised publications of this group is the *Risk Assessment Guide for Industrial Emission Monitoring*, commonly known as the *Yellow Book*. Its adoption as the safety guide for the industry has resulted in its inclusion in Environment Agency guidance and MCERTS scheme and it has remained a clear and concise guide to the potential hazards of the work we do. Its annual revisions have kept it up to date with the ever changing legislation whilst the group has strived to keep it as a simple and practical guide for those up the stack as well as a useful resource for managers, salesmen and process operators.

During the regular meetings, task group members review changes to existing legislation and proposed new legislation and where necessary advise STA members as to the potential implications of such legislation. Such advice is often provided as guidance notes published on the website. Accidents in the industry and in related industries are discussed and if lessons can be learnt then these are communicated through bulletins on the website or as e-mails.

Training of stack testers has become a fundamental role of the STA — none more so than through the long established safety training course. It has become a safety passport for stack testers incorporating the experiences and knowledge of many of the stack testers who have contributed to the health and safety task group. The task group will continue to feed into this essential training.

We have been fortunate in recent years that there have no serious accidents in the UK stack testing industry. This is a trend we all hope will continue but we must not be complacent. The work undertaken on stacks is ever more vital and demanding. The risks are always present and as new staff enter the industry the lessons learnt by more experienced staff must not be lost. The Health and Safety Task Group provides an invaluable resource to the industry to help keep our focus on the serious issue of the safety of those involved in this work.

Equipment Suppliers' Task Group

Representing the manufacturers and distributors of particulate and Gas CEMs, portable instrumentation, sampling equipment and calibration gas suppliers, the group focuses on being a focal point on regulatory, certification and standards issues relevant to emissions monitoring with particular focus on technical issues.

The equipment suppliers' group provides a technical input into UK regulatory consultations related to emissions monitoring, the MCERTS certification process, European and Environment Agency MIDs and is a forum for resolving issues common across equipment suppliers. The Equipment Suppliers' Group Meets four times a year.

EN14181 Task Group

This newly-formed group represents process operators, regulators, test houses, suppliers of CEMs and consultants, and is focused on developing additional practical guidance and work protocols which aid the implementation of EN-14181.

The intention is to build on the pragmatic UK approach to EN-14181. Key objectives are to:

- Develop consistent guidance of requirements around the QAL2 functionality test
- Develop standard work protocols, check lists and guidance assisting the implementation of EN-14181
- Provide input for any future revisions of Environment Agency Technical



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Guidance Note M20

- Provide input to the committee BS- EH2/1 which feeds into any future revision by CEN of EN-14181

Training Task Group

The Training Task Group exists to develop, promote and deliver high quality training packages. These packages are aimed primarily at meeting the needs of STA members, but they are also open to non-members.

As regulatory requirements grow more stringent, the demands on STA members to comply with these regulations increases commensurately. The Training Task Group is committed to responding to members' needs by providing existing courses and developing new courses as appropriate. The full range of STA courses is given elsewhere in this guide. In the past year, in excess of 500 people have attended courses run by the STA. These courses have mainly been

held at the STA offices in Hitchin but, increasingly, courses are delivered to members at their own premises. In addition to providing this service to UK-based STA members, training courses were also delivered directly to STA members in Portugal and Turkey during 2008.

The majority of STA courses will continue to be held at Hitchin but it is the intention to offer scheduled training courses at alternative UK venues during 2009. Details will be posted on the STA website.

Small Business Task Group

Small businesses are innovative, enterprising and flexible. According to the Federation of Small Businesses, they account for 51% of private sector turnover, 59% of the private sector work force and 60% of all commercial innovations.

The STA Small Businesses Task Force (SBTF) was formed to monitor developments in our industry, and to represent the interests of smaller companies at meetings of the other STA Task Groups. Our principal objectives are:

- To promote the interests of members
- To protect members' business
- To identify the continuously changing needs of members

The cost of accreditation to EN ISO/IEC 17025 and the MCERTS Performance Standard is a significant burden for small businesses; however most have achieved certification to both standards and our members are to be commended for their efforts.

Administration

The Association's headquarters are based in Hitchin, Hertfordshire with meeting rooms, library and administration offices.

The Administration is operated by DRC Consultancy Services who provide the manpower and infrastructure for the day to day operation of the association and provide the membership support function.

STA offers its members telephone and email support on any questions relating to emission monitoring and aims to respond within four to eight hours. The website has a public area and also a dedicated members' only area where all the principal STA guidance notes and documentation are kept.

MCERTS schemes

The STA has worked closely with the Environment Agency to develop the MCERTS air schemes and now provides technical support on behalf of SIRA, who are the MCERTS scheme operator on behalf of the Environment Agency. MCERTS has become a mandatory requirement in recent PPC permits issued to process operators.

The Scheme benefits include:

- MCERTS delivers a certification scheme that is both accepted and formally recognised within the UK and internationally
- It provides assurance to regulatory authorities that equipment and services approved to MCERTS standards are suitable, and capable of producing results of the required quality and reliability
- It gives users of monitoring equipment confidence that equipment approved by MCERTS is robust and conforms to performance standards related to current international Standards
- It supports the delivery of accurate and reliable data to regulators and the public
- It provides a framework whereby further monitoring instrumentation and other aspects of compliance monitoring can be formally certified
- It meets the growing requirements of EU Directives, which increasingly specify that monitoring systems must meet minimum performance requirements.

The STA has a dedicated MCERTS support line (01462 450705) for advice and assistance on the MCERTS air schemes or email mcerts@s-t-a.org.