

UKATA Statement on Category A - Asbestos Awareness Refresher Training.

There appears to be considerable confusion in the marketplace currently as to the arrangements necessary to be in place for Refresher Training of Asbestos Awareness – Category A training. This has been prepared to seek to clarify the position from UKATA’s perspective.

1. Frequency of Training.

Regulation 10 of the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2006 establishes the need for asbestos training in general, and states that such training needs to be

- given at regular intervals;
- adapted to take account of significant changes in the type and nature of the work
- provided in a manner appropriate to the risks involved, ensuring the employees are aware of the findings of the risk assessment and any relevant air monitoring

The accompanying ACoP L143 – Work with Materials Containing Asbestos paragraph 147 states that Refresher training should be given at least every year..

The Executive Committee of UKATA hold the firm view that to comply with legislation Category A Asbestos Awareness training must be conducted annually and members shall be expected to meet that requirement.

2. Competence of those providing training

L143 paragraph 139 requires that all training, including refresher training shall be provided by someone who is competent to do so, with adequate personal practical experience and theoretical knowledge of all relevant aspects of the work being carried out.

The Executive Committee believe that the validation and auditing processes UKATA employ to determine the suitability of any organisation (including venues, individual trainers and specific course materials) applying to become or remain a member of UKATA indicates an acceptable level of competence. Therefore successful members of UKATA will have demonstrated the necessary requirements to be considered competent as indicated at paragraph 139 above.

3. Validity of Certificate Duration

Further paragraph 140 of L143 clearly identifies that all training certificates issued shall have a validity of no greater than one year.

UKATA members conducting Category A – Asbestos Awareness training shall not offer certificates of greater duration than twelve months and all members shall be expected to meet that requirement.

4. Form and Manner of Delivery

Paragraph 147 further states that persons who require only asbestos awareness training could have refresher training as part of other health and safety updates, and that employers should identify the specific training needs of their employees so that the refresher training can be appropriately tailored. It should not be a repeat of the initial training.

The Executive Committee have previously stated and maintain the view that face to face asbestos awareness training shall be undertaken every two years while reflecting the particular training needs of the candidates requiring refresher training, as established by a training needs analysis.

Training in the intervening year may be completed as part of other health and safety updates and to that end UKATA have reviewed and re-publish a tool-box talk entitled 'Asbestos Awareness' for this purpose.

The use of on-line learning (e-learning) is ideally suited to meet the requirement of annual refresher training in the second year when supported by face to face initial training and subsequent face to face training every other year.

UKATA uphold the validity of UKATA training certificates issued as a consequence of refresher training in the intervening year can only be maintained if the training in the intervening year is undertaken by a UKATA member.

5. Number of Delegates

In the guidance document HSG247 Asbestos; The Licensed Contractors Guide reference is made with regard to limit the ratio of delegates to trainers to ensure effectiveness of the training. Where practical based training is being delivered this ratio is set at no greater than six delegates to one trainer, whereas for theory based training the ratio is twelve delegates to one trainer.

While it is accepted that the above ratios do not relate directly to Asbestos Awareness Training, the Executive Committee of UKATA are of the firm opinion that the principle is an essential element of effective training and therefore have determined that UKATA members shall be expected to meet the following criteria:

Number of delegates on a UKATA Asbestos Awareness Refresher course:

Recommended : - No greater than 15.

Mandatory: - No greater than 25 maximum