

NON-DESTRUCTIVE TESTING ACCREDITATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

46th MEETING SUMMARY

The 46th meeting of the Non-destructive Testing Accreditation Advisory Committee was held at NATA's Melbourne Office on 14 March 2017.

As in previous meetings, an extensive range of topics was discussed, the principal NDT issues are summarised below.

Proficiency testing matters

The Committee considered the potential for a conflict of interest to arise where a facility's external Level 3 may also provide external proficiency testing services. The Committee discussed the adequacy of NDT Section 5.9 regarding the circumstances where external PT may be required and considered that it is up to the testing facility to demonstrate that any potential conflict is being managed appropriately.

Scope expression for testing of corrosion resistant pipelines

The Committee considered whether the Scope of Accreditation for laboratories should be made more explicit in regard to testing of pipelines manufactured from corrosion resistant materials. The Committee did not believe this to be necessary since facilities must validate their techniques for any given application, which would be confirmed as part of the formal test procedure qualifying process associated with pipeline activities.

Assessing the effectiveness of technical control by a facility's Level 3

The Committee examined the matter of Level 3 qualifications in the context of modern NDT practices and recommended that facilities considering personnel appointments based on arrangements other than ISO 9712 should evaluate any such appointment in terms of the depth, rigour and integrity of the underlying certification process.

Penetrant testing reference and sensitivity plates

The Committee considered the use of reference or sensitivity plates for process monitoring of penetrant testing activities described by AS 2062 Appendices C and D. The Committee agreed that Appendix C may not require performance testing for aerosol based products, since these are not necessarily subject to deterioration provided that batch numbers and 'use by' dates are monitored.

Eddy current methods for examination of welds on cranes

The Committee considered the suitability of AS 4544 for eddy current examination of welds (such as for crane testing) as compared to ISO 17643. The Committee noted potential deficiencies with AS 4544 for such applications including no clear reference to (a) compensation for coating thickness, (b) ensuring material and coating suitability as compared to calibration/reference piece and (c) orthogonal probes specifically designed to compensate for many of the noise limitations encountered in ferromagnetic materials. The Committee recommended that NATA provide further advice to member laboratories on this matter.

Visual inspection of fabricated items after painting

The Committee considered whether accreditation within the NDT field for visual examination of newly fabricated items can include visual inspection of coating integrity. The Committee recommended that the NDT Application Document Annex E (Visual examination) be updated to make it clear that visual examination of coating integrity is not considered to be an accredited activity offered within the NDT field. Accreditation is available for such inspection activities under ISO/IEC 17020.

Minimum wall thickness for phased array ultrasonic testing of welds

The Committee considered the wall thickness requirements for reliable phased array ultrasonic testing of pipeline girth welds and the possible implications arising from the latest version of AS 2885. The Committee did not consider it necessary to provide specific guidance on this matter since a test facility's ultrasonic procedure must be validated for any particular pipeline application, prior to approval of the procedure.