



MCERTS

**The Environment Agency's Monitoring Certification
Scheme**

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UKAS Accreditation



- ⊕ Accredit testing laboratories against international standard ISO/IEC 17025
- ⊕ UKAS not in a position to make additional requirements to this generic standard
- ⊕ Laboratories have to demonstrate technical competence, validity of test methods, appropriateness of equipment & environment
- ⊕ All accredited labs visited on annual basis

MCERTS Scheme



- ⊕ Specific and additional requirements included within MCERTS Performance Standard
- ⊕ UKAS accredits to ISO/IEC 17025 taking into account requirements of MCERTS standard
- ⊕ Environment Agency/UKAS Agreement
- ⊕ UKAS assessing MCERTS on the Agency's behalf
- ⊕ MCERTS Version 2 published Feb 2003 (based around ISO/IEC 17025 standard)
- ⊕ MCERTS Version 3 published March 2006

Specific Scheme Requirements



The following are prescribed in some detail:

- Validation protocol
- Bias and Precision targets
- QC internal and external

Sustainability



- ✦ It works because:
- ✦ laboratories have had to amend their methodologies to ensure that the validation requirements are met for all soil types
- ✦ laboratories cannot return results to the Environment Agency unless the results are covered by MCERTS accreditation
- ✦ laboratories pay for it via their annual accreditation fee to UKAS



Achievement

- ⊕ 3 laboratories accredited for MCERTS in April 2004
- ⊕ 32 laboratories now accredited.
- ⊕ Improvements noted in ongoing AQC data and in proficiency test scheme data
- ⊕ Increased awareness of technical/statistical issues ⇒ Harmonisation in quality of data
- ⊕ Helped to raise standards in the chemical testing of soil

The Future?

- ⊕ Number of accredited labs/analytes continuing to increase
- ⊕ Discussions ongoing over how to validate for total petroleum hydrocarbon (TPH) fractionation and banding within the scope of the standard
- ⊕ Increased availability of CRMs