

Monitor

Newsletter of the Personal Dosimetry Service

Spring 2022 Issue 61

Welcome to *Monitor* Issue 61



Nicky Gibbens
Manager, Personal Dosimetry
Services, UKHSA

Hello again, and welcome to Issue 61 of *Monitor*, the twice-yearly newsletter of the UK Health Security Agency's Personal Dosimetry Service (PDS).

The last six months has gone by quickly, and there have been some changes that have taken place (and continue to do so) both within PDS and wider UKHSA.

As many of you will know, the transition from what was Public Health England (PHE) to UKHSA started in October 2021, and that work continues. PDS will be implementing new systems as part of this process, which we will cover in more detail in a future edition of *Monitor*.

The COVID-19 vaccination programs have gone well, meaning that lockdown is effectively at an end, and we can perhaps start to consider returning to normal ways of working in the future. That said, there have been recent rises in infection rates in the home nations, so we must always remain vigilant and be guided by what our epidemiologists and behavioural scientists advise.

It is a challenge to include something of interest for all our customers in our newsletter, but we trust that some of the following will resonate with our customers: -

- Axel MacDonald, Group Leader, Operational Services Department, has provided an update on the new generation of security scanners currently being rolled out at UK airports.
- PDS has recently been awarded ISO 17025 certification by the UK Accreditation Service, and there is a short article as to how this can benefit our customers.
- Now that lockdown is over, there is an overview of the events that PDS plans to attend for 2022, either as conference delegates or exhibitors.
- An update as to how PDS continues with its "green agenda", specifically in our quest for a new type of postage envelope – and you may be able to help!
- Our PDS UK Price List for 2022/2023 makes its customary Spring appearance and, as stated in the piece, please contact us if volume discounts for our dosimeters and associated services are of interest.

As usual, please let us know if, like other PDS customers, your organisation would be interested in submitting a small piece for publication in a future issue of *Monitor*.

PDS Awarded ISO/IEC 17025:2017 Certification



PDS is pleased to announce that we have been awarded ISO/IEC 17025:2017 certification for our TLD laboratory services. We were awarded our certificate in February of this year after the usual lengthy accreditation process undertaken by UKAS (the UK Accreditation Service). This award confirms that, as a certified laboratory, we work to

agreed standards in providing accurate and reliable results in our testing, calibration, sampling, measurement and reporting services.

Various factors concerning the technical competence of our lab have been audited fully by UKAS including: -

- The qualifications, training, and experience of our staff
- Suitable equipment to do our work, including calibration and maintenance
- Implementing quality assurance procedures
- Adopting proper sampling practices

- Using appropriate testing procedures, and valid test methods
- Ensuring our measurements reference national standards
- Maintaining accurate recording and reporting procedures

To maintain standards, we run regular internal audits of our lab processes, and will be audited and certified by UKAS on a regular basis (at least annually), the good news being that we know this will deliver extra levels of technical assurance to our customers.

PDS hopes to add our PADC neutron and radon services to the scope in the future.

Please note that a copy of our ISO 17025 certificate is available via the UKAS website which also details the scope of the accreditation – see links below.

https://www.ukas.com/wp-content/uploads/schedule_uploads/981792/9971Testing-Single.pdf

<https://verify.ukas.com/29615b56-01df-43b0-ab80-750f2de92482#gs.xhtvwm>

New Types of X-ray Scanners:

Airport Security – Don't Get Caught (Out!)



Axel Macdonald
Group Leader, Operational
Services Department

Airport security is changing, with newer types of X-ray equipment being introduced to assist with passengers passing through security, permitting laptops and other sensitive technologies

to remain in carry-on luggage and similar. These new scanners are also being used for luggage in aircraft holds and for cargo.

Whilst this new X-ray equipment can potentially speed up passenger movement through airport security, the dose to any object passing through these updated X-ray scanners has risen. Up until now, doses of up to 0.01 mSv may have been received during a scan, but with the newer equipment this can be up to 2 mSv per pass.

On its own this is not a problem since this equipment is not intended to scan aircraft passengers, but an object in the scanner, such as a dosimeter in hand luggage, *will* receive this and, of course, a dosimeter such as a TLD will record it. Since many employers set their dose investigation level at 1 mSv per year (the effective dose), a dosimeter passing through this equipment will clearly result in a dose investigation. Furthermore, if the employee is a classified worker, a special entry may be required to amend the person's dose record.

Whilst you can explain to security personnel the reasons why your dosimeter should not be scanned, at the end of the day it is *their* decision whether to do so or not. Your RPA may suggest the issue of a transit dosimeter or an alternative to your TLD dosimeter for the duration of your flight – an electronic dosimeter for instance – that remains compliant with legislation.



The clear message is to speak to your radiation protection adviser (RPA) if there is a requirement to take your dosimeter(s) with you through airport security, and to do so in plenty of time prior to your flight.

As lockdowns brought about by the pandemic ease further, and as people therefore return to air travel in numbers, so it is worthwhile bearing in mind the increased power of these new scanners. This will allow those travelling with dosimeters to take appropriate steps pre-travel to ensure that their dosimeters maintain their integrity when read.

UKHSA PDS can supply travellers with an extra air transit dosimeter to carry along with their normal personal dosimeter for the duration of the journey. The air transit remains unused during the radiation work so that it only measures the travel dose (if any). PDS can deduct any dose received in transit from the personal dosimeter prior to reporting.

Please email customerservices@phe.gov.uk to request an air transit dosimeter, specifying the wearer name and departure date so that we can deliver it to you at the appropriate time.



The PDS Green Agenda – A Working Example

As many of you will know, PDS has adopted a “green agenda” in trying to reduce and limit the environmental impact of what we do in running our dosimetry service. This uses the UKHSA’s Environmental Policy – first developed when we were Public Health England – as a framework, building on several key drivers (amongst others) to ensure the following: -

- That we comply with all UK Government environmental policies
- That sustainability is considered in all UKHSA/PDS policy and operational decisions
- That environmental risks to staff and others affected by our activities are assessed and managed
- That we focus on the way we do business both policy-wise and in our day-to-day activities

We have already made changes within our group to help deliver environmental benefits: -

- We have reduced the amount of paper that we use in the office; whilst we cannot boast of being entirely paperless, one of our aims is to continue to explore how we can use even less
- The paper that we do use is 100% recycled
- More PDS staff walk and cycle to work than before and, once on site, staff are more used to walking to the various facilities here than using their car to do so
- Since April 2021 we have offered paperless reports to our customers which, since its inception, is proving increasingly popular
- COVID has made us more flexible in our meeting arrangements, more of which are on-line and will remain so in future, reducing travel
- More staff have chosen to work at least part-time from home minimising travel to the workplace

The work goes on however, and one key area is the use of our green envelopes that we use for sending out our dosimeters to you - envelopes that so many of you will recognise due to their distinctive colour!

So, from an environmental perspective, what is wrong with these envelopes? Here are a few key points: -

- They are a mixed-materials item, containing a paper outer cover and an internal layer of bubble wrap (to protect your dosimeters)
- Items classed as mixed-materials (or “composite”) need several stages of processing to recover fully the materials in them
- This means they cannot be recycled easily, quickly or cheaply, so they are more than likely destined to end up as landfill

We have investigated sourcing different (non-composite) envelopes from various suppliers, but we are finding it hard to find any of a quality and a colour that are suitable. We want them to stand out so that you can distinguish them



from other post and to help avoid them being put through security X-ray scanners. In addition, they also tend to be much heavier than those we use currently, so postage costs, and thus prices, would increase.

The COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit issues mean that supplies are even more difficult to source. For the time being then, we have opted to stay with our usual supplier until we can find a suitable alternative – but this work continues.

Of course, if any PDS customer out there knows of any suitable new envelope that we could consider, then please e-mail Sally, our Service Team Leader: Sally.Bishop@UKHSA.gov.uk. All suggestions most gratefully received!

Exhibitions in 2022

UKHSA PDS will be exhibiting at or attending the following events in 2022. For obvious reasons, it's been a long time since we've had a chance to meet with so many of our users in one place. So, if you see us or visit our stand at these events then please grab us for a coffee and a chat!



The Society for Radiological Protection
Annual Conference 2022
Venue Cymru, Llandudno
14th – 16th June



The Institute of Physics & Engineering
in Medicine
Radiation Protection Advisor (RPA)
Update 2022
Birmingham 22nd June



Association of University Radiation
Protection Officers
Annual Conference and AGM 2022
Liverpool 6th – 7th September



SRP South West Conference:
Radiation Protection in 2022
Dillington House, Somerset
12th – 13th October

Prices from April 2022

Listed below are PDS prices for dosimeters and associated services effective from 1st April 2022, which do not show any volume discounts at this stage. However, the prices shown do attract such discounts, so please contact PDS for volume-discount details.

ITEM / SERVICE	WEAR PERIOD	PRICE (EA.)
TLD	2-weekly, 4-weekly & monthly*	£6.83
TLD	8-weekly & bi-monthly*	£7.61
TLD	12-weekly, 13-weekly & quarterly *	£8.65
Extremity Stall	All wear periods ¹	£9.12
Extremity Ring	All wear periods ¹	£10.65
PADC Neutron/Radon	All wear periods ²	£39.80
* NB: Orders are subject to a minimum order charge of £62.50		
Miscellaneous		
Unreturned TLD/Extremities	All wear periods	£25.00
TLD Holders	Replacement TLD holder	£2.70
Printed Reports	Per client site	£100.00
Dose Record Keeping with UKHSA Dosimeters	Initial registration fee covering a minimum of 12 months	£33.00
	Renewal fee for subsequent years	£19.55
Dose Record Keeping <i>non-UKHSA</i> Dosimeters	Initial registration fee covering a minimum of 12 months	£125.30
	Renewal fee for subsequent years	£100.00
Special Entries to Dose Records	NB: The first two entries per year are free-of-charge	£8.85
Radiation Passbooks	Next-working-day despatch	£29.18
	Standard despatch	£18.29

All prices apply to UK/European delivery addresses only and exclude VAT, which will be added to charges where applicable. All goods supplied based on these prices are subject to UKHSA's standard Terms & Conditions of supply, available on request.

¹ Orders of 1-6 per year are subject to extra charges

² For low numbers of Radon, extra charges apply to cover controls

Stay connected with the Personal Dosimetry Service (PDS)

Contact

Prefix 01235 (unless*)

Nicky Gibbens, PDS Manager	825334	Laboratories: –	
Christina Hoddinott, Co-ordination & Records Manager	825337	TLD & Extremity	825353
Kinga Zmijewska, Technical Operations Manager	825178	Neutron (Leeds)*	0113 267 9041
Richard Burkett, Dosimetry Manager	825349	Customer Services (CS): –	
Hugh Schoenemann, Customer Services Manager	825412	CS Team (NB: All calls are rotated)	825240
Dosimeter Logistics Office	825339	Please note that old PHE e-mail addresses will continue to be used but will be migrated gradually into UKHSA over the coming months.	
Dose Records Office (NB: All calls are rotated)	825230		
Dose Records e-mail:	doserecords@phe.gov.uk		
Customer Services e-mail:	customerservices@phe.gov.uk		
General PDS e-mail:	personaldosimetry@phe.gov.uk		

A REMINDER THAT, IN KEEPING WITH ITS CONTINUED “GREEN AGENDA”, PDS NOW SENDS OUT PAPERLESS REPORTS ONLY AS A MATTER OF ROUTINE. THE AIM IS TO HELP PRESERVE OUR ENVIRONMENT BOTH THROUGH REDUCTION IN PAPER USE AND THE ASSOCIATED REDUCTION IN TRANSPORTATION. FOR THOSE CLIENTS STILL WISHING TO RECEIVE REPORTS IN PAPER FORM, A FLAT FEE OF £100 PER ANNUM APPLIES.