IDEST BULLETIN – JUNE 2015

The Bulletin for Test Centres and Cylinder Technicians approved by the

***I**nspectorate for **D**iving **E**quipment **S**ervicing & **T**esting*
Accredited to* ISO/IEC *17024:2012

Calibration of Gauges.

When you have the calibration checked on your gauges, thread and pressure, please ensure they are done by a UKAS accredited test laboratory, ***list attached***, and that they have your test centre's name on the certificate. This ensures that the paper trail has been checked by a bona-fide accreditation service and we do not have to follow it through. If it is not your name on the certificate it could be misconstrued as being done for someone else and is being used by yourself for the day.

Ensure there are no * or ** alongside any of the values. A * normally means that these values are suspect.

A certificate of conformity cannot be accepted. This just says it is within the higher and the lower tolerances of the standard, a very wide spread of values. Plug gauges are to be 6G. We need to know the actual measured values at certain points on the thread gauges. This enables the recalibration period be determined.

Do not put thread gauges onto a hard surface. It can imperceptibly turn the edges of a thread over and that will make the gauge out of calibration. This has been seen and pointed out to the relevant technicians.

One calibration organisation said that **"When received the threads were rusty"!!!!!!!!!!**

Is this the way for a competent technician to look after his thread gauges???

Master pressure gauges are only for "calibrating" the working gauges. On visits it has been found that certain technicians are using their Master gauge as well as the working gauge.

The Master gauge **MUST NOT** be used in conjunction with the Working gauge. The Master gauge is your calibrated gauge and should be turned off and totally isolated from the system, unless doing a calibration check on the working gauge.

Refer to attached IDEST ***Technical Information Sheet T002.***

Cylinder Labelling & Stamping

It has come to our knowledge that some people, on the cylinder owner's insistence, are not removing labels from the cylinder exterior. All standards say that labels must be removed, to check underneath for potentially hidden faults, unless placed there by the manufacturers, and because IDEST works to the standards, they **must** be removed.

When a cylinder is stamped there is only one way to do it. That is the way described in the ISO 13769. Some test centres are stamping correctly but the stamps are indistinct. They must be legible and we suggest they are covered with a **thin** coating of paint. It has been noted that on some cylinders, it is not possible to read the stamping because of rust forming, bad stamping or too thick a coating of paint. The stamping should also be legible when the cylinder is vertical. i.e. not upside down.

See the attachment to this newsletter. This shows all the stamping on the cylinder shoulder. Item 22 shows the test centres individual stamp and the year followed by the month. Remember the year can be four digits but need only be two because it now cannot be confused with the year.

Blue Quadrant: The blue quadrant labels should be the latest type. They give more information about the test centre than the old ones. They should be stuck in a way that does not allow them to be removed and reapplied onto other cylinders. If new quadrants are ordered and the old ones returned, credit will be given for the old ones. Some quadrants have been seen stuck on composite cylinders. These should never be used in this application; there are other labels, correct ones, for composites.

Check that the numbering in the centre of the quadrant matches the Test Centre number in the centre of the stamp. Some test centres have found quadrants badly applied to cylinders that have a different stamping number. Obviously someone has been trying to get a fill with an untested cylinder!!

Hydrostatic and visual inspections

When a cylinder has gone past its visual inspection date and is presented to a test centre there can be an issue about which inspection should be done. The situation was discussed at length with the HSE and it was decided that common sense should prevail. A hydrostatic test is not required immediately. If the cylinder is brought in only six months before a hydrostatic test, but has missed the visual it, should have a hydro test. When the visual is carried out late, the date of the hydro test is still the one on the anniversary of the previous hydro test. A late visual should not be used to get a hydro date pushed back by perhaps a year. If a hydro is carried out before its original anniversary date, the next hydro will be five years from the latest, new hydro date.

Cylinders and wrong valves (and vice versa)

Remember there are some threads that will mate reasonably easily, M25 and G3/4, but as they are screwed further together, they will tighten up. Do not apply more torque to get the valve fully into the cylinder. This is a mismatch, is dangerous and should never happen. The threads on the cylinders and valves should be carefully gauged to be the same before fitting.

UKAS and our Accreditation

We have just had six months of audits and surveillances by UKAS to ensure that we are carrying out our certification of technicians as required by British Standards. We previously had our accreditation to BS EN 17024:2003. We are pleased to announce that this has been updated to BS EN 17024:2012. This latest standard is more stringent than the previous one and requires our inspectors to tighten up our inspections even more so than before.

UKAS ASSESSMENT OF IDEST INSPECTORS

IDEST, as an organisation, was approved by UKAS in 2009 and as such had to apply improved standards to their assessment of cylinder testing centres and the technicians. Prior to this UKAS approval, IDEST inspectors would inspect a test centre for its facilities, equipment and procedures. If these were in order the centre gained IDEST approval.

After the UKAS approval, each centre technician had to be assessed for their personal skills in all stages of cylinder testing from booking-in the cylinder, performing the hydrostatic test, servicing the cylinder valve to

completing the worksheet and issuing a test certificate.

In addition to these changes in how IDEST inspectors performed their assessment of centre technicians, so IDEST inspectors have to be assessed by a UKAS assessor. This assessment takes place at a cylinder testing centre at the time of a standard IDEST visit.

The inspection starts with the UKAS inspector briefing the IDEST inspector as to what they are looking for, asking questions about the conduct of the inspection and concluding with a verbal feedback session.

The IDEST inspector then briefs the centre technician in a similar manner and the assessment starts. During the assessment when the technician is asked questions for clarification of procedures by the IDEST inspector, the UKAS inspector would question the latter as to why the questions had been posed and whether the answer was satisfactory.

The UKAS assessor looked through the centre's procedures and checked that the skills being performed were indeed following the appropriate written procedure. This is also done by the IDEST inspector as a matter of course.

After the IDEST inspector had concluded his assessment, with feedback to the centre technician about improvements or deficiencies, the UKAS assessor fed back his appraisal of the inspection conduct. In a structured manner the positives were addressed, improvements suggested and deficiencies identified. Verbal approval can be given at the end of this feedback session if the UKAS inspector is satisfied with the assessment conducted.

Several weeks after this visit a report is sent to IDEST outlining the visit, the satisfactory aspects of the IDEST inspector's assessment and any deficiencies that need to be addressed. It is then up to IDEST to complete these requirements for their inspector to gain full UKAS approval.

All of IDEST inspectors have gone through this process and are currently fully approved by UKAS.

Use of chemicals for cleaning.

It has been noted that some test centres are carrying out chemical cleaning using specific chemicals. One such chemical is ALI-BRITE. This is a non-hydrochloric blend of acid cleaners, specially formulated for descaling, cleaning and brightening aluminium, aluminium alloys and many ferrous and non-ferrous metals.

The manufacturers have been consulted and they say that it is not suitable for the cleaning of breathing gas cylinders. It can be absorbed into the body of the metal but can come out of the metal and hence be breathed in by the user.

O2 cleaning

This is a difficult topic that often comes up. Please see our attached ***Technical Information Sheet T003.***

Communications

When filling in documents, please make sure they are legible!!! If things go wrong they may be used in a court of law and if they are not legible then the information on them could be misconstrued.

Please find attached, our request form (***D027 – Test Centre Update***) for you all to complete so that we can ensure we have the most up-to-date details for your Centre. Please ensure you complete and returned this to Pat Oates by post or email as soon as possible.

Future notification of change of address, or phone numbers, or your email address should preferably be by email to pat@patoates.co.uk

Website Updates

Our newly appointed IDEST webmaster has started to update the IDEST Test Centre section of the SITA/IDEST website.

It is anticipated that the design of the IDEST pages will undergo a substantial change in the very near future to incorporate further information about IDEST, document downloads and advice to technicians and centre owners.

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