



Cross Industry Agreement - Second Technical Meeting 10 October 2018

Meeting Report

Meeting objectives

After the roll call and welcoming participants from Japan, Sweden, Norway, UK, Germany, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Hong Kong and the USA, EURATEX reiterated the main objectives of the Cross-Industry Agreement.

The first technical meeting held in April 2018 revealed more similarities than differences among the test methods presented. The objective of the second technical meeting was to take stock of the progress from the first meeting and further investigate possible work towards a harmonized test method to measure the release of microplastics from the washing of synthetic textiles.

FESI made a brief overview of the main policy developments relevant for microplastics and textiles, both in the EU and the US, since the last technical meeting. In the EU, the most significant piece of legislation, the Plastic Strategy, addresses both intentional and unintentional use of microplastics and includes a reference to the main goal of the Cross-Industry Agreement. In the US, there have been several actions in a few states, namely California, Connecticut and New York for labelling of clothes with mention of possible actions at Federal level to create working groups including the industry to better understand the issue.

EOG invited all interested participants, who presented last time, to provide an update on the progress of their research. Two new participants JTF/Kaken Test Center and Hochschule Niederrhein presented their work.

Presentations (authors mentioned for respect of their work shown in presentation):

Representatives from AATCC (USA), EMPA (Switzerland), Hohenstein (Germany), Leeds University (UK), Kyoto University (Japan), LEITAT (Spain), SGS (Hong Kong), Swerea (Sweden) updated on their research developments.

JTF/Kaken Test Center and Hochschule Niederrhein, as new participants, introduced their work.



Discussion (Chatham House rules apply)

The following main new points emerged from the discussion:

- Gyro vs regular washing machine – challenge of replicating human behavior and externalities
- Microplastic source identification – distinguishing between fibers vs. particles
- Testing on products vs materials

Gyro vs regular washing machine

While participants acknowledged the need for a standardized test method, most of them pointed out difficulties in replicating human behavior as consumers wash different types of fabrics, in different loads, using different detergents. Moreover, one participant pointed out that the water in different geographical areas varies, which may influence the abrasion and shedding as well.

Another challenge that emerged during the discussion is the financial cost of gyro washing machines. Complementing this challenge, one participant said that a test method needs to be affordable and applicable for the sector.

One of the main challenges that the standardized method shall take into account is the washing of different types of garments as this again relates to real-life situations.

Some participants raised a question on the use of detergents since some test methods presented used a standardized soap. A.I.S.E wondered whether the use of a standardized soap represents the reality and whether there is a need to consider detergents at all in the first step of making a test method and rather introduce this variable at a later stage.

Microplastic source identification

One of the findings from a participating research institute, which had also been seen in the work of a second institute, was a high degree of particles in the filtered water, not related to fibers. Preliminary results from their test show that fully filtrated debris may contain up to 90 % of particles and 10 % fibers. Although based on one testing method, this result may prove to be crucial to further investigate and communicate to policy makers, especially with regard to reliability of previously published research and extrapolations based on this early data. Referring to the urgency to develop a harmonized test method (for materials), a participant addressed that there are too many estimations of the issue, particularly from NGOs, and a harmonized test method would be the first and major step to fill in the knowledge gap, particularly related to the source of microplastic pollution.

Testing on products vs materials

One of the presenters pointed out the importance that the future test method is applicable to both products and materials. While agreeing with this, another researcher added that the focus of the CIA shall remain on the material testing as a first step and later focus on consumers, simply due to the urgency of the matter.

Another participant pointed out that CEN is the only way to proceed with a harmonized standard justifying its official process involving all stakeholders. As a response, the CIA signatories indicated that approval of a test method via CEN takes a long time (approx. 5

years) and might not be the most feasible option. Moreover, the CEN has been invited to the second technical meeting. However, it was also acknowledged that one process is not excluding the other. CEN work could be launched in parallel if needed.

Conclusion and next steps (Chatham house rules apply)

Participants and the CIA signatories agreed that core elements of a harmonized test method can be potentially ready by the end of November and may be presented at the Performance days event in Munich on 28-29 November. Coordination on the test method was welcomed by all participating researchers including the non-EU based.

EOG as a coordinator will facilitate cooperation between the participating researchers to develop a grid with all test methods. This way the researchers will have an overview of the details of each test method and identify similarities and more importantly, differences.

The CIA signatories suggested to have a third meeting at the beginning of 2019, preferably January, to discuss the achievements and identify actions to move forward, especially regarding real-life test method.

As next steps, the hosts will: i) check with all participants for comments and permission to publish the meeting outcome (report and presentation), ii) welcome ideas and proposals, and iii) propose a date for a follow up meeting.





Speakers

AATCC, United States
Hohenstein, Germany
Kyoto University Graduate School of Global
Environmental Studies
Kaken Test Center/Japan Textile Federation
LEITAT, Spain
SGS, Switzerland
University of Applied Sciences/
Swerea, Sweden
University of Applied Sciences/ Hochschule
Niederrhein
University of Leeds, UK

Participants

APPLiA
CNR, National Research Council
CNR, National Research Council
EMPA, Switzerland
European Commission
Hohenstein, Germany
Japan Chemical Fibers Association
SINTEF, Norway
University of Leeds, UK
Toray Industries

Hosts

A.I.S.E.
RB – on behalf of A.I.S.E.
CIRFS
Radici - on behalf of CIRFS
Lenzing – on behalf of CIRFS
Aquafil – on behalf of CIRFS
EOG
EOG
EURATEX
EURATEX
FESI
Nike – on behalf of FESI