Marine Archaeological Finds – Asbestos Containing Materials

WHAT HAPPENED

The BMAPA and Crown Estate archaeological reporting protocol encourages vessel crew and wharf staff to report any finds recovered that may have an archaeological interest.

Over the 14 years that the scheme has been in place, over 1,800 finds have been reported by industry staff, through the reporting scheme that is administered by Wessex Archaeology.

A recent assessment of finds has determined that a small number of items may include asbestos containing materials. The items that have the greatest potential for asbestos containing materials may typically be associated with maritime or aviation engineered/mechanical artefacts (pipework, valves, structural members), where asbestos containing material typically formed part of gaskets or seals. Alternatively, it may be contained in fibrous material such as rope or cladding. There is also the potential for this material to be associated with items of ordnance.





LEARNING POINTS / ACTIONS TAKEN

It is important to stress that only a very small number of finds have demonstrated evidence of asbestos containing materials. Furthermore, the risk associated with these items when they are first discovered is considered to be low, on account of the fact they will have been submerged for many years.

In the unlikely event that any asbestos containing material may be present in a find, the potential risk will increase as the item dries or is disturbed. To this end, all maritime or aviation engineered artefacts that are recovered onboard dredgers or at wharves that are dry should be placed in a sealed container or bag immediately after being recorded. If the find is still wet or damp upon discovery, it should be re-submerged in fresh water.

Should any artefacts suspected of containing asbestos containing materials be identified, consult your Asbestos Manager for further guidance. This may require the item being disposed of in accordance with legal requirements.

Where similar finds have been retained by a site and are currently being displayed, it is recommended that these items are assessed for potential asbestos containing materials at the earliest opportunity. Only trained and competent people are permitted to deal with asbestos containing materials.

LOCATION:	**AGGREGATE DREDGER**	**ALERT STATUS:**	**Normal**
ACTIVITY:	**MARINE OPERATIONS**	**DATE ISSUED:**	**17/12/2019 17:16:05**
SUB ACTIVITY:	**DREDGING**	**INCIDENT No:**	**01542**