



The Uranium Processing and Radioactivity Specialists

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM: AM_TN_2010_08_06

SUBMITTED TO: Australasian (iron & steel) Slag Association (ASA)

**SUBJECT: Assessment of Naturally Occurring Radionuclides
in Australian Iron and Steel Slags**

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DATE: 20 August 2010

Commercial-in-Confidence

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Australasian (iron & steel) Slag Association Inc (ASA) was formed in 1990 to increase the community, business and government awareness of the benefits derived from the use of iron and steel furnace slag (ISS) in construction and general civil works applications and how the effective and efficient utilisation of these co-products can benefit the environment and economic sustainable development of recovered resources. The associations' charter is to conduct research and development of common interest to members, provide technical forum for information exchange and support the increased market use of iron and steel slags as a material of choice in the construction and other potential end use industries.

In 2005, the Australian Government, Radiation Health and Safety Advisory Council published a document on naturally-occurring radioactive material (NORM)¹ in Australia. One of the main objectives of the discussion paper was to:

Develop national guidance on exclusion, exemption and clearance for natural radioactive materials, to enable a uniform approach to establishing criteria that may be used to regulate NORM in all jurisdictions.

Historically in Australia, the Commonwealth Government and each State and Territory have independently developed regulatory systems for the use of radioactive materials to satisfy radiation protection requirements. The dislocation between state regulations results in uncertainty for generators, processors and users of NORM in the area of commercial reuse, however, COAG have agreed to make the regulations the same in future.

Internationally, considerable attention has been focused on the development of guidelines and regulations relating to radiation protection, with the recommendation of a 1 Bq/g exemption threshold applying to industrial residues², which the ASA supports. The ASA acknowledges the importance of issues surrounding NORM, in particular, the need to:

- develop nationally consistent regulation for classification and clearance;
- develop appropriate methods of treatment and disposal, where required; and
- establish appropriate exemption thresholds for naturally occurring radioactive material.

The association has made various representations and submissions to this end, however much of the NORM data available on ISS is either dated and/or unpublished. A substantial program to update and verify the nature of current available ISS is therefore required. This assessment seeks to update data on:

- radionuclide concentrations present in ISS;
- assess consistencies/inconsistencies with published data; and
- compare radionuclide concentrations in ISS in comparison with available background radionuclide concentrations in, for example, soils.

¹ Radiation Health & Safety Advisory Council (RHSAC) – *Naturally-Occurring Radioactive Material (NORM) in Australia: Issues for Discussion*, 2005.

² IAEA Safety Guide No. RS-G-1.7, *Table 1, Application of the Concepts of Exclusion, Exemption and Clearance*, 2004.

2. SAMPLES RECEIVED

A suite of thirty nine (39) slag samples were collected by the ASA from members across Australia, **Figure 1**, and submitted to ANSTO Minerals to determine the concentration of naturally occurring radionuclides present in each sample.



FIGURE 1 Distribution of Members

The following table sets out the sample identification coding system used to identify each specific iron and steel slag products into their various categories. Chain of Custody (COC) documentation provided by the ASA indicated the samples to be both aggregates and fine dusts. A copy of COC is given in **Appendix A**.

Product Description	Sample Identification range	Number of samples received
Granulated Blast Furnace Slag	101 – 103	3
Blast Furnace Slag – Air cooled aggregates	201 – 203	3
Blast Furnace Slag – Air cooled fines	204 – 209	6
Steel Furnace Slag – Air cooled aggregates	401 – 406	6
Electric Arc Furnace Slag – Air cooled aggregates	601 – 609	9
Electric Arc Furnace Slag – Air cooled fines	801 – 803	3
Ladle Furnace Slag – Air cooled fines	1001 – 1009	9

Samples were received in 500 mL plastic containers. All samples were dried to constant weight and then pulverised prior to analysis. This information, together with the sample descriptions, is given in **Appendix B**.

3. ANALYSIS BY ANSTO MINERALS

The ISS samples were analysed using the following techniques:

- Gamma spectrometry for uranium and thorium decay chain progeny;
- Delayed neutron counting (DNA) for parent uranium;
- Neutron activation analysis (NAA) for parent thorium;
- Alpha spectrometry for ^{210}Po ; and
- X-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF) for elemental analysis.

The results are summarised in **Table 1**. The radium equivalent values (see **Section 5.2**) have also been included in this table.

For gamma spectrometry, solid samples were packed into 45 mm plastic Petri dishes and left for 3 weeks to allow for the ingrowth of radium daughters. Samples were then counted using high-purity germanium (HPGe) N-type gamma detectors.

The samples were acid digested for radiochemical analysis for ^{210}Po .

XRF analysis was carried out for density correction in gamma spectrometry. These results have been provided in **Appendix C**.

4. GENERAL INFORMATION

Uranium and thorium are found in trace amounts in virtually all materials in the surface layers of the earth's crust. The ^{238}U decay chain (**Figure 2**) is made up of the parent, ^{238}U , and its 13 daughter radionuclides or progeny. Similarly, the ^{232}Th decay chain (**Figure 3**) is made up of the parent, ^{232}Th , and its 10 progeny.

Approximately 3.4 million tonnes of iron and steel slag are produced annually in Australasian (Australia and New Zealand) iron and steel plants³. A large proportion (~60%) is used as road base, or in cement or concrete applications, with the remainder being stored "on site"⁴. The raw materials for steel production are iron ore, coal (coke) and limestone. There are trace levels of uranium in these raw materials, typically in the order of 20-30 Bq/kg for iron ore and coke and 5 Bq/kg for limestone⁵. The slag from the blast furnace also contains low levels of long-lived radionuclides from both the uranium and thorium decay series, in the order of 2-3 times the levels found in the raw materials⁶.

³ http://www.asa-inc.org.au/Doc/ASA_survey_results_2008.pdf [Accessed October 2010].

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ Brown, S., D. Collier, and P. Kenny. Radionuclides in the Iron Sinter Plant circuit BHP, Port Kembla, ANSTO report to Illawarra Radionuclide Investigations Committee, March 2003.

⁶ Crockett, G.M., K.R. Smith, W.B. Otway and S.F. Mobbs. Radiological impact on the UK population of industries which use or produce materials containing enhanced levels of naturally occurring radionuclides, National Radiological Protection Board report, NRPB-W48, Chilton, UK, October 2003.

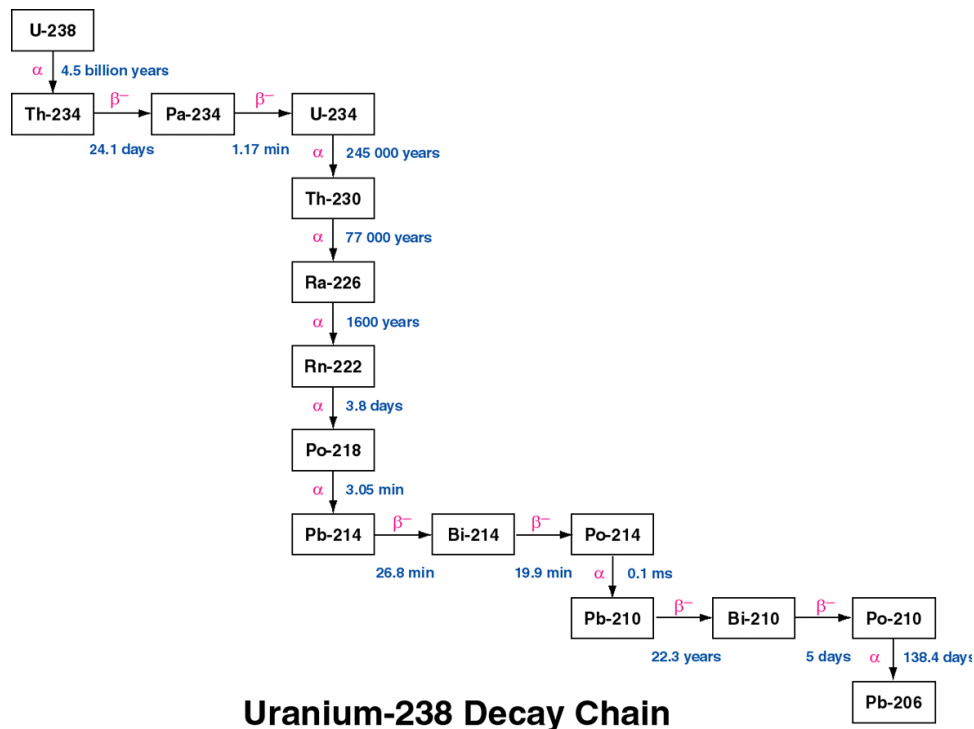


FIGURE 2

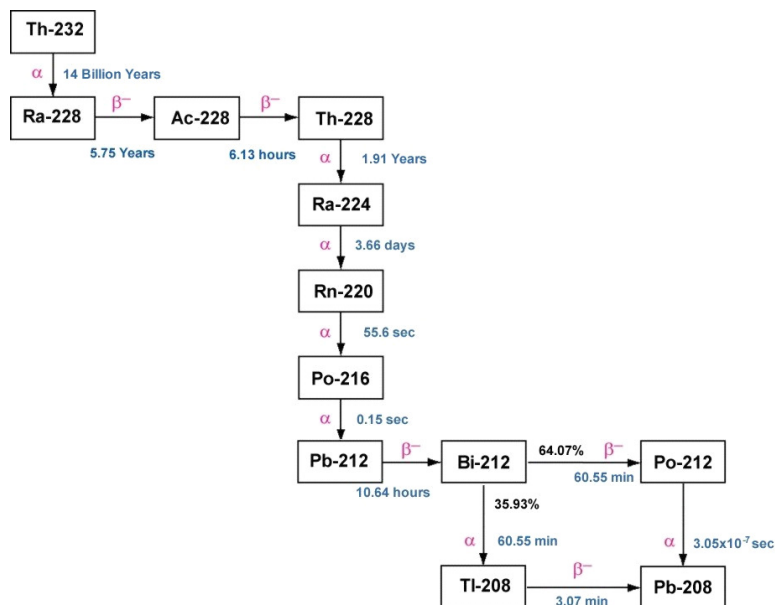


FIGURE 3

Gamma Spectrometry

The activities of radionuclides in the ^{238}U and ^{232}Th decay chains are determined by gamma spectrometry. A chain is said to be in secular equilibrium if the measured activity concentrations (Bq/kg of solid) of the decay chain radionuclides are statistically the same ($\pm 10\%$). This is generally the case in older, primary geological deposits. During chemical and thermal processing, however, the radionuclides behave according to their individual physical and chemical characteristics and hence disequilibrium often results. When this occurs, ^{238}U and ^{232}Th activities must be determined using other analytical techniques (as discussed below).

Not all radionuclides in the respective decay chains emit gamma radiation. The activity of ^{238}U and its progeny (see **Figure 2**) are determined by measuring the gamma-emitting radionuclides ^{234}Th , $^{234\text{m}}\text{Pa}$, ^{230}Th , ^{214}Pb , ^{214}Bi and ^{210}Pb . If the measured activities of the progeny are the same (i.e. secular equilibrium), the activity of ^{238}U can then be inferred from the measured activity of its immediate daughter, ^{234}Th . If the decay chain is not in equilibrium, the sample must be left for 4 months to allow ingrowth⁷ of ^{234}Th from its parent ^{238}U , or the ^{238}U concentration determined independently. Polonium-210 is an alpha emitter and is measured using alpha spectrometry (see below).

In a similar manner, ^{232}Th and its progeny (see **Figure 3**) are determined by measuring the gamma-emitting radionuclides ^{228}Ac , ^{228}Th , ^{224}Ra , ^{212}Pb , ^{212}Bi and ^{208}Tl . If the decay chain is in secular equilibrium, the activity of ^{232}Th is inferred from the measured activity of ^{228}Ac , a short-lived daughter⁸ (6.13 h) of ^{228}Ra .

DNA and NAA

The most accurate methods for measuring ^{238}U and ^{232}Th are DNA and NAA, respectively. Both are selective, sensitive and rapid nuclear techniques used to determine these elements at ppm levels or lower.

Radiochemistry

In this work, ^{210}Po was determined using alpha spectrometry. Polonium was extracted from 6 M hydrochloric acid using diethyl ammonium diethyl dithiocarbamate (DDTC) in chloroform. After autodeposition onto a silver disc, ^{210}Po was alpha counted.

5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

During processing, radionuclides partition according to both their physical and chemical properties. Typically, the more volatile radionuclides (^{210}Pb , ^{210}Bi and ^{210}Po) accumulate in dusts and stack emissions while the more refractory elements (U, Th and Ra) report to the slag⁹. These refractory radionuclides are more concentrated in the slag because of the mass ratio of slag to the ore. Radioactivity released to the atmosphere during combustion consists primarily of gaseous ^{222}Rn .

In iron and steel making, the main accumulation of radioactivity in the sinter plant is due to ^{210}Pb and ^{210}Po in the dust collected from the gas cleaning systems. The concentrations of ^{210}Pb and ^{210}Po

⁷ The half-life of ^{234}Th is 24.10 days. ^{234}Th will be in equilibrium with its parent, ^{238}U , after 5 half-lives or 120 days.

⁸ The half-life of ^{228}Ac is 6.13 hours. ^{228}Ac will be in equilibrium with its parent, ^{228}Ra , after 5 half-lives or 31 hours.

⁹ Safety Guide *Management of Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material (NORM)*, Radiation Protection Series No. 15, ARPANSA, August 2008.

become further enhanced because of recycling of the dust to the sinter plant in order to reduce dust emissions⁸ and maximize iron recovery.

5.1 Radionuclide Concentrations in ISS

The results of this study (see **Table 1**) have shown that the slag samples contain low concentrations of radioactivity and accordingly would not be considered radioactive from a regulatory perspective. A material is classified as radioactive for the purpose of trading if the concentration of any single radionuclide is above the limit² of 1 Bq/g (or 1000 Bq/kg) for radionuclides of natural origin or above 10,000 Bq/kg for ⁴⁰K.

5.2 Activity Concentration Indices

For end-use products, the radium equivalent activity is an index commonly used to compare the activity concentrations of building materials that contain varying amounts of Ra, Th and K. It is defined¹⁰ as the weighted sum of the activity concentrations of ²²⁶Ra, ²³²Th and ⁴⁰K and is based on the estimation that 370 Bq/kg of ²²⁶Ra, 259 Bq/kg of ²³²Th and 4810 Bq/kg of ⁴⁰K produce the same gamma dose. A radium equivalent of 370 Bq/kg in building materials can produce an exposure of about 1.5 mSv/y to the inhabitants⁹.

The radium equivalent, Ra_{eq} , is defined as:

$$Ra_{eq} = A_{Ra} + (A_{Th} \times 1.43) + (A_K \times 0.077)$$

where A_{Ra} , A_{Th} and A_K are the activities of ²²⁶Ra, ²³²Th and ⁴⁰K, respectively.

The Ra_{eq} values for the ISS in this study are given in **Table 1**. The values ranged from 0.015 to 0.22 Bq/g. Based on these results, if any of these ISS were blended for use in, for example, concrete, at a ratio of say, 5% by weight¹¹, the contribution of the slag to the total gamma ray dose from the concrete would be well below 1.5 mSv/y.

¹⁰ UNSCEAR, *Ionising Radiation: Sources and Biological Effects*, United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, 1982.

¹¹ Beretka, J. and Mathew, P.J., *Natural radioactivity of Australian fly ashes*, 2nd International Conference on Ash Technology and Marketing, London, September 16-21, 1984.

TABLE 1
Gamma Spectrometry, DNA, NAA and Radiochemistry Results

Sample		DNA		Gamma			Radiochemistry		NAA		Gamma			Radium
No.	Type	²³⁸ U		²³⁰ Th	²²⁶ Ra	²¹⁰ Pb	²¹⁰ Po*	Sampling Date	²³² Th		²²⁸ Ra	²²⁸ Th		Equivalent
		ppm	Bq/g	Bq/g	Bq/g	Bq/g	Bq/g		ppm	Bq/g	Bq/g	Bq/g		Bq/g
101	Granulated BFS	10	0.13	< 0.2	0.14	< 0.02	0.016	12-Mar-10	7.9	0.032	0.061	0.061		0.19
102	Granulated BFS	9.4	0.12	< 0.2	0.13	< 0.02	0.04	12-Mar-10	10	0.040	0.071	0.060		0.20
103	Granulated BFS	10	0.12	< 0.2	0.14	< 0.03	0.05	12-Mar-10	8.7	0.035	0.065	0.063		0.20
201	10 mm Aggregate	11	0.14	< 0.2	0.13	< 0.02	0.11	12-Mar-10	6.7	0.027	0.067	0.062		0.18
202	10 mm Aggregate	11	0.14	< 0.2	0.14	< 0.02	0.09	12-Mar-10	6.7	0.027	0.072	0.067		0.055
203	10 mm Aggregate	11	0.14	< 0.2	0.14	< 0.02	0.59	12-Mar-10	14	0.058	0.064	0.065		0.099
401	10 mm Aggregate	0.57	0.0070	< 0.2	0.010	< 0.03	0.08	12-Mar-10	14	0.058	< 0.01	0.004		0.095
402	10 mm Aggregate	0.70	0.0087	< 0.2	0.012	< 0.03	0.015	12-Mar-10	14	0.058	< 0.01	0.005		0.097
403	10 mm Aggregate	0.71	0.0088	< 0.2	0.009	< 0.02	0.023	12-Mar-10	15	0.061	< 0.01	0.003		0.099
204	-7 mm Dust	11	0.13	< 0.2	0.13	< 0.03	0.032	12-Mar-10	15	0.059	0.066	0.062		0.10
205	-7 mm Dust	10	0.13	< 0.2	0.12	< 0.03	0.006	12-Mar-10	15	0.061	0.063	0.058		0.22
206	-7 mm Dust	11	0.13	< 0.2	0.12	< 0.02	0.011	12-Mar-10	0.71	0.0029	0.061	0.056		0.13

* ²¹⁰Po activity on sampling date.

TABLE 1 (continued)
Gamma Spectrometry, DNA, NAA and Radiochemistry Results

Sample		DNA		Gamma			Radiochemistry		NAA		Gamma			Radium
No.	Type	²³⁸ U		²³⁰ Th	²²⁶ Ra	²¹⁰ Pb	²¹⁰ Po*	Sampling Date	²³² Th		²²⁸ Ra	²²⁸ Th		Equivalent
		ppm	Bq/g	Bq/g	Bq/g	Bq/g	Bq/g		ppm	Bq/g	Bq/g	Bq/g		Bq/g
801	-6 mm Dust	0.47	0.0058	< 0.2	< 0.01	< 0.03	0.016	12-Mar-10	0.71	0.0028	< 0.01	< 0.01		0.016
802	-6 mm Dust	0.50	0.0062	< 0.2	< 0.01	< 0.03	0.029	12-Mar-10	0.72	0.0029	< 0.01	< 0.01		0.016
803	-6 mm Dust	0.76	0.0094	< 0.2	< 0.01	< 0.03	0.010	12-Mar-10	0.96	0.0039	< 0.01	< 0.01		0.018
601	Air-cooled EAF	0.82	0.010	< 0.2	0.012	< 0.03	0.008	9-Mar-10	1.8	0.0074	< 0.01	0.006		0.025
602	Air-cooled EAF	0.78	0.0097	< 0.2	0.010	< 0.02	0.042	9-Mar-10	1.4	0.0056	< 0.01	0.005		0.020
603	Air-cooled EAF	0.69	0.0086	< 0.2	0.012	< 0.03	0.005	9-Mar-10	1.5	0.0061	< 0.01	0.006		0.022
1001	Ladle Furnace Slag	0.82	0.010	< 0.2	0.012	< 0.03	0.018	12-Mar-10	2.0	0.0082	< 0.01	0.008		0.026
1002	Ladle Furnace Slag	1.2	0.014	< 0.2	0.011	< 0.02	0.015	12-Mar-10	2.0	0.0081	< 0.01	0.007		0.026
1003	Ladle Furnace Slag	0.89	0.011	< 0.2	0.011	< 0.03	0.03	12-Mar-10	1.9	0.0076	< 0.01	0.006		0.025
607	Air-cooled EAF	0.48	0.0059	< 0.2	0.008	< 0.02	0.016	9-Mar-10	0.95	0.0039	< 0.01	0.004		0.015
608	Air-cooled EAF	0.39	0.0048	< 0.2	0.009	< 0.03	0.074	9-Mar-10	0.84	0.0034	< 0.01	0.003		0.015
609	Air-cooled EAF	0.82	0.010	< 0.2	0.011	< 0.03	0.012	9-Mar-10	1.6	0.0065	< 0.01	0.006		0.023

* ²¹⁰Po activity on sampling date.

TABLE 1 (continued)
Gamma Spectrometry, DNA, NAA and Radiochemistry Results

Sample		DNA		Gamma			Radiochemistry		NAA		Gamma			Radium	
No.	Type	²³⁸ U		²³⁰ Th	²²⁶ Ra	²¹⁰ Pb	²¹⁰ Po*	Sampling Date	²³² Th		²²⁸ Ra	²²⁸ Th		⁴⁰ K	Equivalent
		ppm	Bq/g	Bq/g	Bq/g	Bq/g	Bq/g		ppm	Bq/g	Bq/g	Bq/g		Bq/g	Bq/g
1007	Ladle Furnace Slag	1.9	0.023	< 0.2	0.021	< 0.02	0.017	2-Mar-10	4.1	0.017	< 0.02	0.017		< 0.03	0.048
1008	Ladle Furnace Slag	1.4	0.018	< 0.2	0.014	< 0.02	0.025	2-Mar-10	3.1	0.012	< 0.01	0.010		< 0.03	0.033
1009	Ladle Furnace Slag	2.0	0.025	< 0.2	0.015	< 0.02	0.11	2-Mar-10	4.0	0.016	< 0.02	0.017		< 0.02	0.039
604	Air-cooled EAF	0.83	0.010	< 0.2	0.011	< 0.03	0.012	9-Mar-10	1.3	0.0054	< 0.01	0.006		< 0.02	0.020
605	Air-cooled EAF	0.84	0.010	< 0.2	0.012	< 0.03	0.025	9-Mar-10	1.5	0.0060	< 0.01	0.006		< 0.02	0.022
606	Air-cooled EAF	0.86	0.011	< 0.2	0.011	< 0.02	0.015	9-Mar-10	1.3	0.0053	< 0.01	0.006		< 0.01	0.019
1004	Ladle Furnace Slag	2.1	0.025	< 0.2	0.025	< 0.02	0.014	9-Mar-10	5.1	0.021	0.018	0.021		< 0.03	0.057
1005	Ladle Furnace Slag	1.3	0.017	< 0.2	0.017	< 0.03	0.021	9-Mar-10	2.4	0.0098	< 0.01	0.010		< 0.03	0.033
1006	Ladle Furnace Slag	1.1	0.014	< 0.2	0.015	< 0.02	0.006	9-Mar-10	2.5	0.010	< 0.01	0.010		< 0.03	0.032

* ²¹⁰Po activity on sampling date.

TABLE 1 (continued)
Gamma Spectrometry, DNA, NAA and Radiochemistry Results

Sample		DNA		Gamma			Radiochemistry		NAA		Gamma			Radium
No.	Type	²³⁸ U		²³⁰ Th	²²⁶ Ra	²¹⁰ Pb	²¹⁰ Po*	Sampling Date	²³² Th		²²⁸ Ra	²²⁸ Th		
		ppm	Bq/g	Bq/g	Bq/g	Bq/g	Bq/g		ppm	Bq/g	Bq/g	Bq/g		Bq/g
207	Air-cooled BFS	12	0.15	< 0.2	0.15	< 0.03	0.40	23-Feb-10	10	0.041	0.048	0.042		< 0.06
208	Air-cooled BFS	11	0.14	< 0.2	0.14	< 0.02	0.034	23-Feb-10	9.9	0.040	0.044	0.041		< 0.06
209	Air-cooled BFS	11	0.14	< 0.2	0.14	< 0.03	0.011	23-Feb-10	9.5	0.038	0.050	0.039		< 0.06
404	Air-cooled SFS	2.4	0.029	< 0.2	0.029	< 0.03	0.09	23-Feb-10	4.3	0.017	< 0.02	0.017		< 0.03
405	Air-cooled SFS	1.6	0.019	< 0.2	0.019	< 0.03	0.014	23-Feb-10	1.5	0.0061	< 0.01	0.007		< 0.03
406	Air-cooled SFS	1.5	0.018	< 0.2	0.020	< 0.03	0.028	23-Feb-10	1.8	0.0073	< 0.01	0.007		< 0.03

* ²¹⁰Po activity on sampling date.

5.3 Comparison with Previous Studies

The radionuclide concentrations in ISS depend on the origin of the raw materials and the type of processing employed. The typical worldwide concentrations in blast furnace slag are given in UNSCEAR 2000¹². The stated total contained activity values are 150 Bq/kg for both uranium, thorium and their respective decay chain progeny. It should be noted however, that these values assume secular equilibrium in each of the decay chains, which is not normally observed in process samples such as ISS.

El-Taher et al.¹³ assessed the natural radioactivity and radiation hazards associated with the cement industry in Egypt. The ²²⁶Ra concentration in the slag used for production was high compared to average world values¹¹, most likely due to higher concentrations in the iron ore used. The results are given in **Table 2**.

Sofilic et al.¹⁴ studied the radiochemical characteristics of electric arc furnace slags from steelmaking in Croatia and the results for ²³⁸U, ²²⁶Ra, ²³²Th and ⁴⁰K are given in **Table 2**.

Kovler¹⁵ assessed the radiological constraints of using building materials and industrial by-products in construction in terms of legislation and standards. The values given for typical and maximum concentrations for ²²⁶Ra, ²³²Th and ⁴⁰K in common building materials and industrial by-products in Europe are given in **Table 2**. These values have been taken from European Commission document RP-112¹⁶.

Turhan¹⁷ examined twelve blast furnace slags in his study of Turkish cement and its raw materials and the concentrations for ²²⁶Ra, ²³²Th and ⁴⁰K are given in **Table 2**.

The iron and steel industry in Sweden uses raw materials from Swedish mines in two plants. Soderman et al.¹⁸ found that the concentrations of naturally occurring radionuclides were low in raw materials, but blast furnace slag contained enriched concentrations of radionuclides. The ²²⁶Ra concentration given was 250 Bq/kg.

El-Afifi et al.¹⁹ evaluated radionuclide concentrations in common building materials used for construction in Egypt. They did not detect ²²⁶Ra, ²³²Th or ⁴⁰K in the iron slag waste from iron and steel production.

¹² UNSCEAR, *Sources and Effects of Ionising Radiation*, United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, Volume I: Sources Annex B, 2000.

¹³ El-Taher, A., Makhluaf, S., Nossair, A. and Abdel Halim, A.S., *Assessment of natural radioactivity and radiation hazards due to cement industry*, Applied Radiation and Isotopes, 68, 169-174, 2010.

¹⁴ Sofilic, T., Barisic, D., Rastovcan, M. and Sofilic, U., *Radionuclides in steel slag intended for road construction*, J. Radioanal. Nucl. Chem, 248, 73-77, 2010.

¹⁵ Kovler, K., *Radiological constraints of using building materials and industrial by-products in construction*, Construction and Building Materials, 23, 246-253, 2009.

¹⁶ European Commission RP-112, Radiological Protection Principles concerning the Natural Radioactivity of Building Materials, 1999.

¹⁷ Turhan, S., *Assessment of the natural radioactivity and radiological hazards in Turkish cement and its raw materials*, Journal of Environmental Radioactivity, 99, 404-414, 2009.

¹⁸ Soderman, A.L., Brewitz, E and More, H., *Investigation of NORM activities in Sweden*, in Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material (NORM V) Proceedings of an International Symposium, Seville, Spain, 19–22 March 2007.

¹⁹ El Afifi, E.M., Hilal, M.A., Khalifa, S.M. and Aly, H.F., *Evaluation of U, Th and K and emanated radon in some NORM and TENORM samples*, Radiation Measurements, 41, 627-633, 2006.

TABLE 2
Radionuclide Concentrations (Bq/kg) in Steel Production Slags and
Maximum and Minimum Concentrations for ISS in this Study

	²³⁸ U	²³⁰ Th	²²⁶ Ra	²¹⁰ Pb	²¹⁰ Po	²³² Th	²²⁸ Ra	²²⁸ Th	²³⁵ U	²²⁷ Th	⁴⁰ K
UNSCEAR, 2000 ¹¹											
	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150			
El-Taher et al., 2010 ¹²											
			299			24					166
Sofilic et al., 2010 ¹³											
	9-24		13- 24			7-14					8-37
Kovler, 2009 ¹⁴											
typical			270			70					240
maximum			2100			340					1000
Turhan, 2008 ¹⁶											
value			308			148					243
range			8-308			1.6 - 337					18 -389
Soderman et al., 2007 ¹⁷											
			250								
El Afifi et al., 2006 ¹⁸											
			ND			ND					ND
Crockett et al., 2003 ⁵											
	88	88	88	88		49	49	49	4	4	
Beretka and Mathew, 1985 ²⁰											
			181			100					141
Maximum and Minimum Radionuclide Concentrations for ISS (in this study)											
Maximum	150	< 200	150	< 30	400	61	72	67			
Minimum	6		8		6	3	< 10	< 10			

In their study of the radiological impact on the UK population from steel production, Crockett et al.⁵ stated that Australia is a source of raw materials used in UK steel production. Typical radionuclide concentrations for slag removed from blast and BOS furnaces (not distinguished) are given in **Table 2**.

Hofmann et al.²⁰ stated in their report to the European Commission that iron ore production and refining processes do not increase the NORM content in the product, by-product, refuse or equipment. This is because there are large additions of other materials to the process, which results

²⁰ European Commission Nuclear Safety and the Environment Report EUR 19264, *Natural Radionuclide Concentrations in Materials Processed in the Chemical Industry and the Related Radiological Impact*, J. Hofmann, R. Leicht, H. Wingender and J. Worner, August 2000.

in a dilution of the radionuclides in the slag. Because of this, the iron ore industry was not studied further.

Beretka and Mathews²¹ measured natural radioactivity in Australian building materials. Slag samples included air-cooled, granulated and pelletized²² blast furnace slag from New South Wales and air-cooled slag from South Australia. At that time, Small quantities of pelletized slag was being used as lightweight aggregate in concrete in New South Wales, granulated slag for glass-making and air-cooled slag as road base or civil engineering applications. The results are given in **Table 2**.

The data in **Table 2** indicate that the Australian ISS samples in this study are “typical” when compared to similar iron and steel production samples used in building materials in other parts of the world.

5.4 Comparison with Background Concentrations in Soil

Uranium is found in all soils and the concentration varies according to the type of rock the soil is derived from. **Table 3** summarises a selection of average natural radionuclide concentrations in soils found in the literature. The maximum and minimum radionuclide concentrations for ISS in this study have been included for comparison.

The maximum radionuclide concentrations for ISS generally exceed the ranges given in **Table 3** for ²³⁸U, ²²⁶Ra, ²³²Th, however, given that ISS would most likely be mixed with other components for use in building materials, these concentrations would be significantly diluted. The minimum radionuclide concentrations for ISS are at the lower end of the ranges given in **Table 3**.

6. CONCLUSION

The results of this study have shown that ISS samples in this study contain low concentrations of radioactivity and would not be considered radioactive from a regulatory perspective (< 1 Bq/g).

These samples were typical of ISS used in the building and construction industry in other parts of the world.

The use of the types of slags in this study in similar applications in building and construction should not pose a significant OH&S risk to workers or the public. Dilution would further reduce the radionuclide concentrations and therefore the associated risk.

²¹ Beratka, J. and Mathews, P.J., *Natural radioactivity of Australian building materials, industrial wastes and by-products*, Health Physics, 48, 87-95, 1985.

²² Pelletized blast furnace slag is no longer manufactured in Australia.

TABLE 3
Average Radionuclide Concentrations in Soils and Maximum and Minimum Concentrations for ISS in this Study

Reference	Concentration in soil (Bq/kg)			
	²³⁸ U	²²⁶ Ra	²³² Th	⁴⁰ K
<i>Background Concentrations (general)</i>				
Karunakara et al. ²³	-	31 (15 – 61)	26 (11 – 42)	160 (78 – 255)
UNSCEAR ¹¹	35 (16 – 110)	35 (17 – 60)	30 (11 – 64)	400 (140 – 850)
IAEA ²⁴	25 (10 – 50)	25 (10 – 50)	25 (7 – 50)	370 (100- 700)
NRC ²⁵	22	-	-	-
Eisenbud and Gesell ²⁶	22	-	37	400
Myrick et al. ²⁷ (world)	24 (12 – 49)	29 (18 – 73)	24 (8 – 48)	-
Myrick et al. ²⁸ (USA)	37 (4 – 141)	37 (4 – 141)	36 (4 – 126)	-
<i>Background Concentrations (around U production sites)</i>				
Ramli et al. ²⁹	59 – 485	-	60 - 1204	-
Tome et al. ³⁰	93 – 328	191 – 492	14 – 48	-
Read and Pickering ³¹	2.3	< 17	-	-
Ibrahim and Whicker ³²	50	-	44	-
<i>Maximum and Minimum Radionuclide Concentrations for ISS (in this study)</i>				
Maximum	150	150	61	140
Minimum	6	8	3	10

²³ Karunakara, N., Somashekarappa, H.M., Avadhani, D.N., Mahesh, H.M., Narayana, Y. and Siddappa, K., Radium-226, ²³²Th and ⁴⁰K distribution in the environment of Kaiga of south-west coast of India. *Health Physics*, 80, 470-476, 2001.

²⁴ IAEA, *Generic Procedures for Assessment and Response during a Radiological Emergency*, IAEA TECDOC Series No. 1162, 2000.

²⁵ NRC, *Evaluation of Guidelines for Exposures to Technologically Enhanced Naturally Occurring Radioactive Materials*, 1999.

²⁶ Eisenbud, M. and Gesell, T., *Environmental Radioactivity from Natural, Industrial and Military Sources*, 4th Edition, 1997.

²⁷ Myrick, T.E., Bervan, B.A. and Haywood, F.F., *State Background Radiation Levels: Results of Measurements Taken During 1975-1979*. ORNL/TM-7343. Oak Ridge National Laboratory, 1981.

²⁸ Myrick, T.E., Bervan, B.A. and Haywood, F.F., *State Background Radiation Levels: Results of Measurements Taken During 1975-1979*. ORNL/TM-7343. Oak Ridge National Laboratory, 1981.

²⁹ Ramli, A.T., Hussein, A.W. and Wood, A.K., Environmental ²³⁸U and ²³²Th concentration measurements in an area of high level natural background radiation at Palong, Johor, Malaysia. *Journal of Environmental Radioactivity*, 80, 287-304, 2005.

³⁰ Tome, F.V., Rodriguez, P.B. and Lozano, J.C., Distribution and mobilisation of U, Th and ²²⁶Ra in the plant-soil compartments of a mineralised uranium area in south-west Spain, *Journal of Environmental Radioactivity*, 59, 41-60, 2002.

³¹ Read, J. and Pickering, R., *Ecological and toxicological effects of exposure to an acidic, radioactive tailings storage. Environmental Monitoring and Assessment*, 54, 69-85.

³² Ibrahim, S.A., and Whicker, F.W., Comparative uptake of U and Th by native plants at a U production site. *Health Physics*, 54, 413-419, 1988.

APPENDIX A

Samples Received

ASA

Commercial-in-Confidence

ANALYSIS REQUEST AND CHAIN OF CUSTODY

Australasian (iron & steel) Slag Association, PO Box 1194,
Wollongong NSW 2500, Telephone: +61 2 4228 1389,
Facsimile: +61 2 4228 1777, Mobile: 0418 885 290,
Email: info@asa-inc.org.au

Company Name: Australasian (iron & steel) Slag Association
Project Name: NORMS
Contact Name: Mona Forghani
Address: PO Box 1194 Wollongong NSW 2500
Email: mforghani@hbmgroup.com.au
Phone: (02) 42258466
Fax: (02) 42281777

Matrix Codes	Preservative Codes	Container Codes
CW - Clean Water	P1 - Chilled 4°C	C1 - 12X PET
WW - Waste Water	P2 - Frozen	C2 - 500mL PET
GW - Ground Water	P3 - Filtered	C3 - 200mL PET
EF - Effluent	P4 - HNO ₃ PH<2	C4 - 100mL PET
BS - Biosolid	P5 - H ₂ SO ₄ PH<2	C5 - 1L Glass
SL - Soil	P6 - HCl PH<2	C6 - Amber Glass
SD - Sediment	P7 - Lugol's Iodine	C7 - Sterile
OT - *Other	P8 - *Other	C8 - *Other

ANALYSES REQUIRED

Client Sample ID	Description	Sample Date ¹	Matrix	No. Of Containers	Container Type + Preservative						ANALYSIS REQUIRED	
											NORM	
101	Granulated Blast Furnace Slag	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	
102	Granulated Blast Furnace Slag	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	
103	Granulated Blast Furnace Slag	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	
201	10mm Aggregates	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	
202	10mm Aggregates	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	
203	10mm Aggregates	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	

¹ Sample means date of production, i.e. sample collected within 1 or 2 days of production

204	7mm Dust	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
205	7mm Dust	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
206	7mm Dust	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
207	Blast Furnace Slag – air cooled	23.2.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
208	Blast Furnace Slag – air cooled	23.2.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
209	Blast Furnace Slag – air cooled	23.2.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
401	10mm Aggregate	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
402	10mm Aggregate	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
403	10mm Aggregate	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
404	Steel Furnace Slag – air cooled	23.2.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
405	Steel Furnace Slag – air cooled	23.2.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
406	Steel Furnace Slag – air cooled	23.2.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
601	Electric Arc Furnace Slag – air cooled	9.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
602	Electric Arc Furnace Slag – air cooled	9.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
603	Electric Arc Furnace Slag – air cooled	9.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
604	Electric Arc Furnace Slag – air cooled	9.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
605	Electric Arc Furnace Slag – air cooled	9.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
606	Electric Arc Furnace Slag – air cooled	9.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
607	Air Cooled EAF	9.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
608	Air Cooled EAF	9.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	
609	Air Cooled EAF	9.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8						Yes	

801	6mm Dust	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	
802	6mm Dust	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	
803	6mm Dust	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	
1001	Ladle Furnace Slag	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	
1002	Ladle Furnace Slag	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	
1003	Ladle Furnace Slag	12.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	
1004	Ladle Furnace Slag	9.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	
1005	Ladle Furnace Slag	9.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	
1006	Ladle Furnace Slag	9.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	
1007	Ladle Furnace Slag	2.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	
1008	Ladle Furnace Slag	2.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	
1009	Ladle Furnace Slag	2.3.10	OT	1	C2	P8					Yes	

Samples relinquished by: M Forghani

Date/Time: 17/3/2010

Samples received by:

Date/Time:

COMMENTS:

Please retain sample until: /12/2010

APPENDIX B**Sample Identification, Weights (as received) and Dry Weights (105°C)**

Sample ID	Sample Type	ANSTO ID	Wt as Rec'd	Dry Wt
101	Granulated BFS	ASA-220410-1	470.1g	450.3g
102		ASA-220410-2	479.5g	461.1g
103		ASA-220410-3	516.5g	494.3g
201	10 mm aggregate	ASA-220410-4	540.5g	524.5g
202		ASA-220410-5	691.4g	669.0g
203		ASA-220410-6	648.4g	629.6g
401	10 mm aggregate	ASA-220410-7	632.3g	623.3g
402		ASA-220410-8	739.7g	726.1g
403		ASA-220410-9	668.3g	654.3g
204	-7 mm Dust	ASA-220410-10	670.3g	644.3g
205		ASA-220410-11	670.2g	651.0g
206		ASA-220410-12	672.0g	652.0g
801	-6 mm Dust	ASA-220410-13	920.1g	903.5g
802		ASA-220410-14	898.8g	883.1g
803		ASA-220410-15	773.4g	748.1g
601	Air-cooled EAF	ASA-220410-16	657.7g	663.8g
602		ASA-220410-17	841.4g	831.0g
603		ASA-220410-18	789.9g	787.9g
1001	Ladle Furnace Slag	ASA-220410-19	821.6g	793.5g
1002		ASA-220410-20	901.0g	874.2g
1003		ASA-220410-21	750.0g	711.6g
607	Air-cooled EAF	ASA-220410-22	558.6g	556.3g
608		ASA-220410-23	391.7g	391.0g
609		ASA-220410-24	339.8g	335.4g
1007	Ladle Furnace Slag	ASA-220410-25	146.3g	146.0g
1008		ASA-220410-26	128.1g	127.4g
1009		ASA-220410-27	158.8g	156.9g
604	Air-cooled EAF	ASA-220410-28	1000.5g	982.2g
605		ASA-220410-29	933.3g	917.3g
606		ASA-220410-30	996.7g	978.8g
1004	Ladle Furnace Slag	ASA-220410-31	802.7g	760.3g
1005		ASA-220410-32	819.2g	779.4g
1006		ASA-220410-33	815.8g	770.2g
207	Air-cooled BFS	ASA-220410-34	530.0g	529.3g
208		ASA-220410-35	540.0g	539.4g
209		ASA-220410-36	529.0g	526.9g
404	Air-cooled SFS	ASA-220410-37	905.6g	904.5g
405		ASA-220410-38	763.1g	761.5g
406		ASA-220410-39	807.6g	804.8g

APPENDIX C

XRF Results

REPORT NUMBER: 1001321 XRF

Job Description: ASA Craig Heindrich

Report Date: 17th May 2010

Fusion: 1 g sample + 8 g 12:22 flux (Li tetraborate:Li metaborate)

Program: Minerals REE + U

Sample name	Al (%)	Ca (%)	Cr (%)	Cs (%)	Fe (%)	Mg (%)	Mn (%)	S (%)	Si (%)	Sr (%)	Ti (%)	V (%)	Zr (%)
ASA-220410-1	7.5	30	0.008	0.043	0.74	2.9	0.28	0.46	16	0.16	0.52	0.022	0.12
ASA-220410-2	7.3	30	0.014	0.041	1.00	2.9	0.31	0.41	16	0.16	0.54	0.025	0.11
ASA-220410-3	7.2	29	0.017	0.042	0.63	2.8	0.30	0.44	17	0.16	0.52	0.023	0.12
ASA-220410-4	7.2	28	0.018	0.040	0.36	2.8	0.39	0.40	15	0.16	0.57	0.027	0.11
ASA-220410-5	7.4	30	0.024	0.041	0.34	2.9	0.40	0.41	16	0.16	0.58	0.030	0.11
ASA-220410-6	7.4	30	0.032	0.041	0.44	2.9	0.41	0.43	16	0.16	0.57	0.033	0.12
ASA-220410-7	1.9	28	0.23	0.047	19	5.6	3.4	0.073	4.8	0.12	0.57	0.86	0.035
ASA-220410-8	1.9	27	0.25	0.047	19	5.6	3.4	0.066	4.7	0.12	0.55	0.84	0.043
ASA-220410-9	1.6	28	0.23	0.055	18	6.1	3.0	0.067	5.1	0.12	0.56	0.77	0.044
ASA-220410-10	7.1	30	0.010	0.044	0.54	3.0	0.32	0.51	16	0.16	0.59	0.027	0.11
ASA-220410-11	8.2	35	0.017	0.047	0.50	3.5	0.37	0.55	18	0.15	0.68	0.031	0.12
ASA-220410-12	7.1	30	0.012	0.040	0.45	3.0	0.32	0.52	16	0.16	0.59	0.026	0.11
ASA-220410-13	1.3	24	0.21	0.049	27	5.3	2.8	0.060	4.1	0.11	0.49	0.68	0.039
ASA-220410-14	1.3	28	0.21	0.044	18	6.1	3.1	0.073	4.6	0.12	0.55	0.76	0.043
ASA-220410-15	1.6	28	0.18	0.047	16	5.7	2.9	0.077	4.7	0.12	0.51	0.70	0.041
ASA-220410-16	3.5	19	1.1	0.044	24	5.4	4.2	0.076	6.1	0.13	0.28	0.081	0.069
ASA-220410-17	3.0	18	1.1	0.041	28	4.2	3.7	0.090	4.5	0.12	0.24	0.074	0.059
ASA-220410-18	3.1	18	1.1	0.044	27	4.4	4.0	0.086	4.8	0.12	0.25	0.081	0.056
ASA-220410-19	2.6	23	0.46	0.038	14	7.2	2.4	0.12	7.9	0.13	0.22	0.042	0.072
ASA-220410-20	2.5	22	0.47	0.038	13	7.4	2.6	0.11	7.6	0.13	0.23	0.048	0.069

APPENDIX C
XRF Results (continued)

Sample name	Al (%)	Ca (%)	Cr (%)	Cs (%)	Fe (%)	Mg (%)	Mn (%)	S (%)	Si (%)	Sr (%)	Ti (%)	V (%)	Zr (%)
ASA-220410-21	2.5	23	0.41	0.035	12	7.4	2.7	0.12	8.3	0.13	0.23	0.045	0.076
ASA-220410-22	2.0	20	2.4	0.049	28	3.8	4.9	0.079	4.8	0.13	0.21	0.14	0.073
ASA-220410-23	1.7	21	1.7	0.049	27	4.2	5.5	0.075	4.4	0.12	0.17	0.13	0.059
ASA-220410-24	2.3	21	2.2	0.045	23	4.0	4.6	0.112	6.7	0.13	0.22	0.13	0.086
ASA-220410-25	2.2	37	0.14	0.048	1.5	2.4	1.3	0.188	15	0.14	0.26	0.012	0.085
ASA-220410-26	1.9	33	0.14	0.044	0.84	6.2	1.5	0.151	16	0.14	0.33	0.027	0.100
ASA-220410-27	2.4	35	0.47	0.041	0.99	4.0	0.86	0.084	16	0.14	0.29	0.022	0.089
ASA-220410-28	2.7	22	1.3	0.049	22	6.2	3.4	0.068	6.0	0.13	0.34	0.081	0.062
ASA-220410-29	2.8	22	1.2	0.044	21	6.3	3.4	0.074	6.0	0.13	0.34	0.079	0.061
ASA-220410-30	2.8	22	1.2	0.045	21	6.2	3.5	0.074	6.2	0.14	0.34	0.079	0.062
ASA-220410-31	3.5	27	0.42	0.042	10	7.1	2.2	0.13	8.9	0.14	0.36	0.038	0.082
ASA-220410-32	2.4	27	0.48	0.043	11	7.4	2.4	0.14	8.5	0.13	0.32	0.047	0.077
ASA-220410-33	2.4	24	0.41	0.039	16	6.4	3.8	0.12	8.2	0.12	0.30	0.040	0.067
ASA-220410-34	5.6	27	0.012	0.036	1.8	6.6	0.11	0.54	16	0.18	0.19	0.009	0.11
ASA-220410-35	5.4	27	0.008	0.043	4.5	6.4	0.15	0.56	16	0.17	0.19	0.012	0.10
ASA-220410-36	5.4	27	0.005	0.040	3.8	6.3	0.15	0.57	16	0.17	0.19	0.012	0.10
ASA-220410-37	2.7	26	0.12	0.045	18	5.7	2.3	0.07	6.7	0.12	0.32	0.062	0.060
ASA-220410-38	1.5	26	0.12	0.047	22	5.6	2.0	0.061	6.3	0.12	0.28	0.070	0.048
ASA-220410-39	1.7	27	0.13	0.046	19	5.8	2.1	0.073	6.7	0.12	0.29	0.066	0.062

