

METHOD STATEMENT



Determinand:

Analysis of Environmental Monitoring Plates and Strips

Matrix:

Air monitoring plates and strips

Principle of Method:

Air monitoring plates and strips are provided to the laboratory by clients following sampling activities. The analysis is carried out by incubating the plates or strips at an appropriate temperature and time under appropriate conditions for the agar medium and the organisms sought. These may be the same media or organisms as detailed in other existing methods or may have other specific requirements. These are summarised in a table in 7.3.

Following incubation, the plates or strips are examined, and colonies present are counted.

If confirmatory analysis or identification of the colonies is required, this is carried out by MALDI-ToF MS (Matrix-assisted laser desorption/ionisation time of flight mass spectrometer), or other appropriate techniques detailed in specific methods. Samples requiring confirmatory analysis should also be registered for the "Bacti or Fungi ID" method (W41).

Sampling and Sample Preparation:

Agar plates and strips are submitted to the laboratory by clients.

Once the sampling activity has been undertaken, the samples should be transferred immediately to dark storage conditions and kept at a temperature between 2 - 8°C for transport to the laboratory. If samples are not analysed immediately on receipt in the laboratory, they should be kept at a temperature between 2 - 8°C, in dark conditions until analysis commences.

Analysis should commence as soon as practicable. There is no stated stability time for this type of sample, however analysis should commence as soon as possible to minimize the impact on samples and results, ideally within 24 hours of sampling

Interferences:

The source and handling of the plates or strips is outside of the control of the laboratory. Therefore various factors including mishandling of the agar or strips, mishandling or misuse of the sampling equipment or poor storage of the plates or strips may impact the analysis.

Performance of Method:

Not applicable for this method

References:

N/A