

Newsletter

March 10, 2014

The Spirit Is Among Us

vis à vis

Casual Walkway Safety and Meaningful Tribometry

Those of you who have been in this business for a while and were on the mailing list of Bill English will remember how he would take a query or comment that came to him and feature it as a discussion in his newsletters. In that light, we will now do the same. There is a recurring theme reflected by two separate people who recently contacted **EXCEL TRIBOMETERS, LLC** with the following related comments:

“What is up with F2508? Do we need to do it every year? Should we even be doing it? Now that the standard exists, all the opposition has to say in court is that our (individual) machine is not calibrated to the highest standard (has current individual instrument F2508 calibration), therefore all measurements are suspect.”

and

“At some point, the occasional (forensic) users (those who only periodically do slip and fall work and the associated measurements) are easy targets (on cross examination in court) for those who live in the research world or do this type of work all of the time and therefore have a deep library of applicable standards, support literature, and the wherewithal to afford (specific related) training and participation in ASTM, ASSE, etc.”

The simple answer is obvious to those who are current with the information readily available in the Newsletters published over the last three years, with the information on the **EXCEL TRIBOMETERS, LLC** website, and to those who have taken the CXLT certification program within the last three years. The answer is there is a lot to know, and you must always be current.

First, the design of the English XL VIT is F2508 validated, which means the instrument is accurate and repeatable when you follow the same procedure used by the manufacturer for the F2508 validation. Of course you have to know what the F2508 standard says and means, and you must know and understand the supporting documents and data upon which the F2508 standard was based. The

important aspects to know include that the supporting research was based on the performance of 80 pre-qualified healthy young people, in a laboratory, wearing a harness, suspended from a trolley; and that the precision necessary to rank and differentiate between three lubricated surfaces as slippery or slipperier than ice has very little to do with assessing the real world risk for human slip and fall injury events. Check out the numerous [EXCEL TRIBOMETERS, LLC Newsletter](#) articles on these points.

Second, you must know, understand and follow the current English XL VIT User Guide. By knowing that the English XL VIT was F2508 validated following the current User Guide, and by being able to represent that you followed the current User Guide, specifically wherein the English XL VIT standard test foot must be calibrated on a certified calibration tile before each testing episode, then you will be able to confirm and represent that your measurements are accurate and meaningful, and your instrument performed as validated by the manufacturer. It goes without saying that you also must show that your instrument is current with its annual instrument calibration.

Next, you must know and understand that you have to perform test foot calibration before each testing episode, and verify that your test foot preparation technique is consistent and reliable. Then, you can dispel any criticism based on published pre-F2508 performance where operators did not reliably calibrate their test feet. When you know and follow the current User Guide, you will readily recognize that anyone who says that test feet or instruments get widely varying results under the same conditions has not followed the User Guide, and has not calibrated the test foot on a certified calibration tile.

The tough nut is if you don't have the appropriate authoritative sources in your library, and you are not current with your scientific and technical training, and you don't participate in the development of the standards and technology related to walkway safety and meaningful tribometry, then yes, someone who is more prepared and competent in the field than you will strip your clothes from you in public.

If you rely exclusively or principally on the fact that the English XL VIT is F2508 validated as your science or justification for the use of the instrument and for the significance of the values you measure with the instrument, you are far out on a thin limb.

F2508 is not and cannot be 100% of your scientific basis or justification for the use of any tribometer or for the significance of any value that you measure with a tribometer. The F2508 standard is a merely one of many tools that supports what should be a wide range of in-depth knowledge of the sciences, standards and technologies related to walkway safety and meaningful tribometry. F2508 most likely constitutes somewhere about 5% of the substance of a competent

analysis or opinion when assessing the risk for human slip and fall injury; there is a lot more to it than just a number from a machine.

If you say that a value of 0.50 measured with the English XL VIT is an absolute number below which (0.49) is dangerous, and above which (0.51) is safe and no one will ever fall, then you will again be hung out and dried. You have to be able to explain to others where the values come from and what they mean.

Unfortunately, **EXCEL TRIBOMETERS, LLC** is not a consulting engineering firm. We cannot provide to you the extensive knowledge necessary to compile and present a competent professional analysis and opinion, particularly in court. The current CXLT certification program provides an overview in one day of the tips of the many icebergs that you must have as part of your knowledge bank to be professionally competent, and to successfully formulate and defend your opinions. There is no easy way out. You must be prepared. You must invest time and resources to be professionally competent in the necessary sciences and technologies. Just buying the finest scalpel doesn't make you a surgeon.

Fortunately, **EXCEL TRIBOMETERS, LLC** can provide you with the best known walkway tribometer for assessing the real world risk for human slip and fall injury, as confirmed in the laboratory, in the papers, and in its use by many of the major insurance carriers when they assess their billions of dollars of annual exposure from slip and fall risk. **EXCEL TRIBOMETERS, LLC** is always available to provide you with the technical support you need for the continued reliable performance of the instrument.

NEXT CXLT PROGRAM: Baltimore, MD

The next **CXLT Certification Program** will be conducted by **EXCEL TRIBOMETERS, LLC** on Wednesday, March 26, 2014, in Baltimore, MD, at the Fairfield Inn & Suites Baltimore Downtown/Inner Harbor, 101 President Street, Baltimore, MD, where a block of rooms has been reserved at a special rate of \$139.00. The rate is available for a limited time, as is space in the Program, so book early. Contact the hotel directly for room reservations at 800-228-2800, or reserve rooms online: [Online Reservation](#)

The current program is constantly being improved to maximize the value for your investment, with expanded sciences and extensive hands-on instruction with the instrument. First time CXLT program participants, very experienced English XL users who wanted a refresher, as well as CXLT's who chose to retake the course and the test to maintain their current status have all touted the program.

To read comments received, check out: [CXLT Program Testimonials](#)

Here's an example of recent feedback: "Even though I had been to a previous version of the course, I thought the course was quite valuable — there was much new material and a great discussion of the current standards."... "I thought the program was well done and the material updated (and revised) sufficiently that it was worth attending the course again. It was apparent that a lot of work has been done to improve the course, to improve the ease of use of the XL VIT, and to support its use in industry. Well done." - I.S. (Current CXLT)

ALL ENGLISH XL VIT OWNERS SHOULD CONSIDER THE CXLT PROGRAM

Of course, we encourage anyone who owns an English XL VIT who has never taken the program to please do so in order to ensure your compliance with both the understanding of the science and principles of walkway safety and slip resistance metering, as well as proper and accurate use of the English XL VIT. Please consider the importance of your participation.

Holding the CXLT certification assures your **recognition and respect** as an expert who is knowledgeable, competent, and proficient in walkway safety, meaningful tribometry, and in the use of the English XL VIT. Anyone who wants to perform a competent risk assessment of a walkway, or evaluate flooring and footwear products, needs to establish a strong foundation in the principles of safety engineering, the sciences of walkway safety, the scientific and mechanical aspects of the available slipmeters, and the effects of reasonably foreseeable variables on the performance of walkways and slipmeters. The certification also shows the CXLT had extensive hands-on instruction in the proper use of the English XL VIT and proved his or her proficiency with the most respected slip meter.

Make sure you review the **updated and expanded** [CXLT Certification Program](#) on the **EXCEL TRIBOMETERS, LLC** website. Also please keep in mind on-site programs are available if you are one of the many organizations that have a large staff who are interested in tribometry and walkway safety.

CXLT REGISTRY: CXLT'S-PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION IS CURRENT!

The CXLT certification has become such a **recognized, respected** and significant credential in the world of walkway safety and meaningful tribometry **EXCEL TRIBOMETERS, LLC** is regularly contacted by attorneys and other parties to verify whether people representing themselves in court as CXLT's actually are, and to see if they are current and in good standing.

Please check and make sure you are current. We do our best to send out reminders to alert you when the renewal process should be completed, but if

your contact information changed, you are on your own to renew. Please make sure **you** keep us **up to date** with your contact information.

Unfortunately and regretfully, a few CXLT's are **revoked** every month for not renewing. Hopefully, they no longer need to be a CXLT; otherwise, they have lost a credential that is increasingly more important.

INSTRUMENT CALIBRATION AND REFURBISHING SERVICE

Your English XL VIT is a scientific instrument and requires regular instrument calibration and refurbishing, as with any similar credible metering device. The fee for English XL VIT instrument calibration, if you are on time, is \$250. For those of you who are not current and your slipmeter is overdue, we are offering new standard pricing of \$350 plus parts, which encourages overdue English XL VIT users to bring their instrument up to date. The English XL VIT instrument calibration is **not the same** as the F2508 calibration, which is not the same as the F2508 validation testing and reporting. The extensive testing, on the four (4) reference surfaces, with special cleaning procedures and reagents, and the required calibration reporting, are all much more extensive than the English XL VIT calibration and refurbishing.

Please keep in mind that if you maintain your tribometer by sending it for the English XL VIT instrument calibration service at the proper intervals, **we will repair anything** within 6 months following service, for shipping costs only, unless there is clear evidence of physical abuse or extraordinarily extensive use. Some machines are shared by many and used constantly. Those slipmeters need servicing more often.

Note our **updated mailing address** that provides a more secure facility for receiving your equipment.

We **value your input** and questions, and look forward to hearing from you. All of your comments and concerns are welcome and will be thoroughly addressed. Your communications are treated with respect, and kept in the strictest of confidence. You may contact Peter directly at 757-897-2853, or by email at pwidas@exceltribometers.com

Thank you for your participation in the continuing efforts for advancements in the field of walkway safety and meaningful tribometry.

Peter Widas, BSMSE, CXLT, Vice President, Chief Operating Officer

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