alpha tracker

LAB SAMPLE EXCHANGE GUIDE

Version 1.0

start software

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document

Lab Sample Exchange Guide

Current Version

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1.0	July 2025	All	First issue

Previous Versions

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1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Exchanging sample data

The Lab Sample Exchange is a feature in Alpha Tracker for surveying companies to easily send sample data to external labs who also use Alpha Tracker for fibre analysis, and for those labs to return the analysis results at the click of a button.

The Lab Sample Exchange works through OpenAsbestos™ to enable the sharing of sample data electronically from other Alpha Trackers and also from some other external systems (eg Flow Mobile Surveying).

> 🖉   *OpenAsbestos is an open, collaborative, not-for-profit initiative for the asbestos industry. Based on web standards and commonly agreed data exchange formats, it enables software systems to exchange asbestos-related data and documents safely and securely. You can find more information on OpenAsbestos here: https://openasbestos.org/.*

1.2   Who is the Lab Sample Exchange for

Surveying companies using Alpha Tracker who also have their own lab can use the Lab Sample Exchange to manage their lab's workload. If you do not have sufficient capacity in your lab to analyse all the samples you have received, you have a method to send the sample details quickly and easily over to another Alpha Tracker lab.

Similarly, if you are an Alpha Tracker lab with spare capacity, you can pick up additional work, book it in really quickly and then send the results and certificate back electronically.

1.3   Who carries out which tasks

The instructions in this document explain how to set up your Alpha Tracker to use the Lab Sample Exchange whether you are a surveying company or a lab, or both. They also describe the steps needed to send and receive the data.

Sections are marked with either S or L to indicate who should carry out the steps:

S   Surveying company

L   Lab

2.   SETTING UP YOUR SYSTEM

The Lab Sample Exchange works through OpenAsbestos™ to enable the sharing of sample data electronically from one Alpha Tracker to another, and also from some other external systems. There is some set-up required to enable the sharing of data.

There are two parts to the setting up of the Lab Sample Exchange:

- registering your Alpha Tracker system

- linking your system to one or more labs using Alpha Tracker.

2.1   Registering your system

Before you can use the Lab Sample Exchange – whether you are an Alpha Tracker Surveying company, an Alpha Tracker Lab or both – you must register your Alpha Tracker system. This is a secure process. By registering with the Lab Sample Exchange, you are also registering for OpenAsbestos and enabling the Alpha Tracker API, which means that your system is open for exchanging data via a secure API.

> ✎ *Note that it is possible to turn on the Alpha Tracker API without registering with OpenAsbestos. However, to use the Lab Sample Exchange you need both and the easiest way to do this is to register for the Lab Sample Exchange as this will automatically do both.*

To register:

1.   Select *Linked Accounts* from the General section of the Setup menu.

The Linked Accounts screen is displayed, with the Alpha Tracker API, Lab Sample Exchange and OpenAsbestos displayed by default (other linked accounts may also be displayed, depending on your system setup).
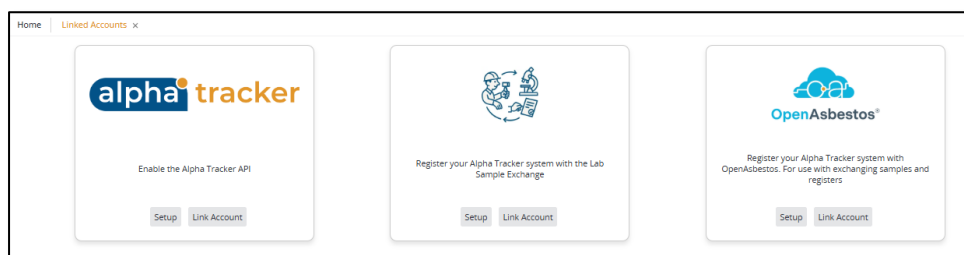
2.   Click **Setup** on Lab Sample Exchange to open the Setup Linked Account window into which you can enter the setup details for your OpenAsbestos account.

3.   The **Company Name** field is pre-populated with your company name as it is held within Alpha Tracker. Amend this as necessary so that it shows the name by which you want to be known in the Lab Sample Exchange.

4.   If you are a Lab, enter the email address to be notified when samples are received in the Lab Sample Exchange into the **Samples Received Email** field.

5. If you are a Surveying company, enter the email address to be notified when samples have been analysed into the **Samples Analysed Email** field.

Note that if you are both a Lab and a Surveying company, then you would enter both these email addresses.

6. Save the account details. A message confirms the data has been saved and asks if you want to link your accounts now. Click yes to continue. (You have the option of completing the linking later by using the **Link Account** button.)

7. A further message informs you that the Lab Sample Exchange requires the Alpha Tracker API and OpenAsbestos and that these will be automatically enabled. Click **OK** to continue.

   The Linked Accounts screen now shows the Alpha Tracker API, Lab sample Exchange and OpenAsbestos as being enabled. (They display **Remove** buttons only.) You are registered with the required services.
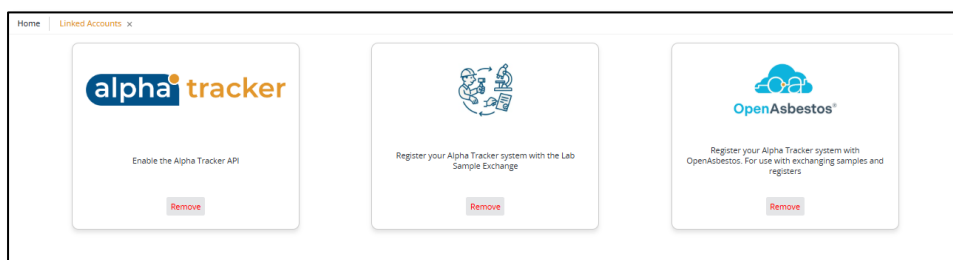
2.2 Linking to a Lab

This section describes how to link to an Alpha Tracker Lab so that you can send sample data to them. As a Surveying company, you will need to have at least one linked Lab. The options for this can be found on the Sample Exchange menu.
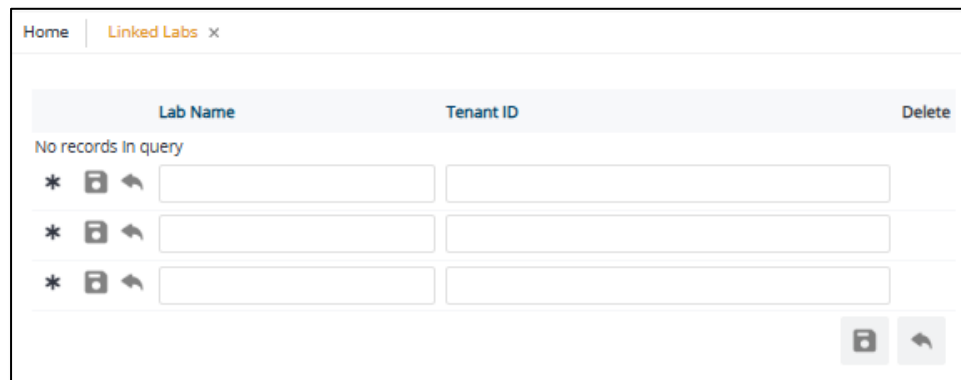
The Sample Exchange menu is displayed if the setting "Show Lab Sample Exchange" is set to yes. The options displayed on this menu depend on whether you have the Lab module enabled or not.

The Lab that you want to link to must already be registered with both OpenAsbestos and the Alpha Tracker API.

To link to a Lab:

1. Open *Linked Labs* from the Sample Exchange menu.

Home	Linked Labs ✕		
	Lab Name	**Tenant ID**	**Delete**
No records in query			
✱ 🖫 ↩			
✱ 🖫 ↩			
✱ 🖫 ↩			
			🖫 ↩

2. Enter the name of the Lab in the **Lab Name** field. This can be your name for the Lab, it does not need to match their formal name.

3. Ask the Lab for their OpenAsbestos tenant ID and enter this in the **Tenant ID** field.

   The Lab can find their Tenant ID in the System Repository. It is help in a setting called "OpenAsbestos API Tenant ID".

4. Save the details.

You can now send sample data to the linked Lab(s).

3.   SENDING AND RECEIVING SAMPLE DATA

The Surveying company sends the sample data via the Lab Sample Exchange, and the Lab receives the data, booking it into their Alpha Tracker where they can carry out the fibre analysis.

3.1   Sending sample data

To be able to send sample data you must have registered your system, and you must have specified one or more linked Labs.

To send sample data:

1.   Open the project that contains the samples and go to the Survey Details screen, tab "2 – Survey Complete".

2.   Open the Lab Details section and click **Send Samples to Sample Exchange**.

If you have no linked Labs to send samples to, a message tells you to add one. If you do have some, the Send Samples to Lab screen is displayed.

3. Use the dropdown list to select which of the linked Labs you want to send the samples to.

4. Amend the default **Description** displayed if required. By default it is set to the Site Name.

5. Click **Send to Lab**. The samples are sent to the Lab Sample Exchange and the Lab receives an email notification.
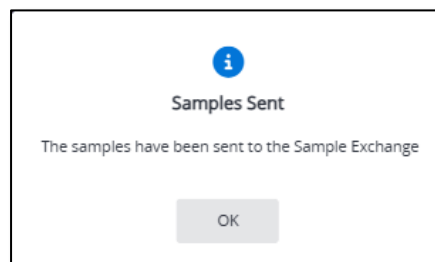
> 🖉 *If you were to click the button again to try to send the samples a second time, a message will let you know that the samples have already been sent for this project. This does not mean that you cannot add late samples into the project – you have until the Lab creates the project in their Alpha Tracker to finalise the samples included in the project.*
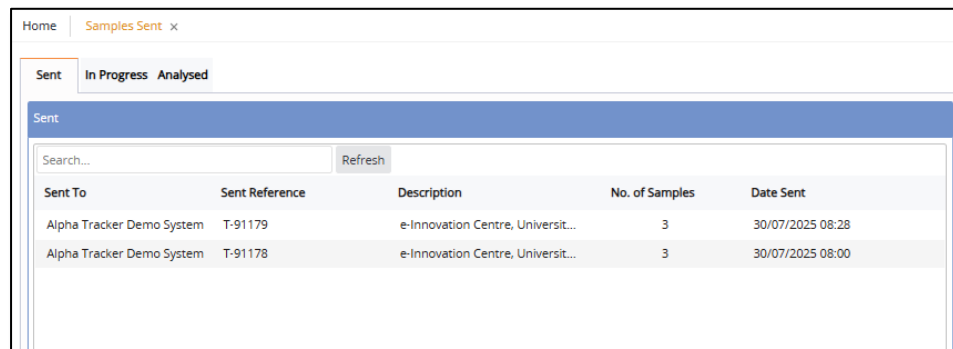
The lab can now receive the samples and perform the fibre analysis.

3.2 Checking samples sent

You can check which projects/samples you have sent to which Labs by using the Samples Sent screen.

1. Select *Samples Sent* from the Sample Exchange menu to display the Samples Sent screen.
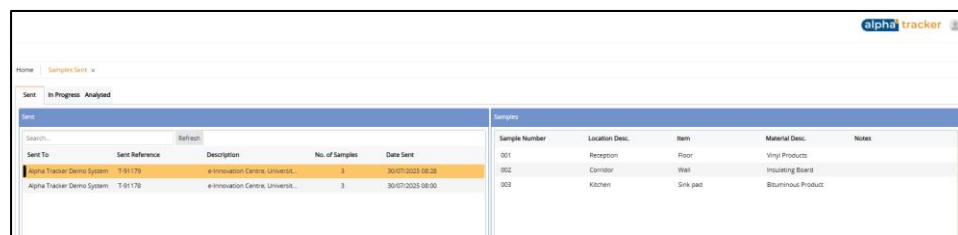
On this screen you can see:

- the Lab the samples were sent to

- the reference (ie the project number)

- the description (by default this is the site name)

- the number of samples.

2.   Click on an entry to see the list of samples and their details on the right of the screen.

There are other tabs on this screen that show details of the samples that are currently being analysed by a linked Lab (In Progress) and those that have had their analysis completed and are ready to have the results uploaded (Complete).

3.3   Receiving sample data

As a Lab, you have a screen on which you can see the samples that have been sent to you via the Lab Sample Exchange. From this screen, you can receive the samples, ie book them into your Alpha Tracker by creating a project for them.

To receive samples:

1.   Select *Samples Received* from the Sample Exchange menu to display the Samples Received screen (Received tab).

Any samples received by the system but not yet booked in are displayed.

2. Display the details of the individual samples by clicking on the entry. The details are displayed on the right of the screen.

3. Click **Create Project** to book these samples in. A window is displayed for you to select or enter the Project letter to be used for the new project in your Alpha Tracker, the Project Type (this will be a Bulk Sample-type Project Type), the Client and the Site Name.

> 🖉 *If the Site does not already exist for the Client, you can create a new one. Search for it first by clicking on the magnifying glass in the **Site Name** field, and then if necessary you can use the **New Site** button.*

4. Click **Confirm** to create the new project which is displayed on screen.

You can check the sample setup on the new project by clicking the **Samples** button and going to the Sample Setup tab where the samples are listed. The Material of the sample will be matched to a Material in your system if at all possible. If it is not possible, then the Material field will be left blank for you to select the most appropriate option.

An email is sent to the Surveying notification email address at the Surveying Alpha Tracker informing them that the samples have been accepted by the Lab (the setting is "Lab Sample Exchange Samples Received Email").

The samples are no longer displayed on the Received tab on the Samples Received screen; they are now visible on the In Progress tab, which also displays your new project number under which you will analyse the samples.

4.   SENDING AND ACCEPTING RESULTS

When the Lab have completed the analysis of the samples, they can send the results back to the Surveying company. The Surveying company can first check the results and then, if OK, can update their survey data with the analysis results.

4.1   Sending analysis results

As the Lab, you complete your analysis of the samples in your Bulk Sample project and generate the Bulk Certificate as normal. You are then ready to send the results back to the Surveying company.

1.   Generate the bulk certificate as normal from tab "5. Results" on the Sample Setup screens.

2.   Carry out any necessary checks or authorisations.

3.   When you are ready to send the results back to the Surveying company, click the **Send Results to Sample Exchange** button on tab "5. Results" on the Sample Setup screens.

4.   The results and the certificate are sent to the Lab Sample Exchange and an email notifies the Surveying company.

4.2   Checking data has been sent

You can check the data has been sent by using the Samples Received screen:

1.   Select *Samples Received* from the Sample Exchange menu to display the Samples Received screen and go to the In Progress tab.

2.   Refresh the data on the In Progress tab; the entry just completed should disappear.

3. Display the Completed tab, the entry should now be displayed here.

4.3 Checking and receiving analysis results

As the Surveying company, you receive an email notification when the analysis of a batch of samples is complete. First check the results that you have received and then, if OK, update your survey data with the results.

1. Select *Samples Sent* from the Sample Exchange menu to display the Samples Sent screen and go to the Analysed tab.

2. Click on the entry for the sample results just received. The individual sample details are displayed on the right, including the identification and analyst's assessment of the material.

3. If you are happy with the results, click **Accept Results**. The survey data is updated and you have the option to open the survey data to review it.

4. Click Yes to review the survey data which now has the lab results uploaded.

The system attempts to match the Material if it is the same or slightly different. Where this is not possible, the Material Description in the survey data is populated with the Analyst's Assessment. You should always review the survey data to check this is acceptable.

5. Check the certificate is present in the Certificates subfolder.

   Once the results have been accepted, the entry disappears from the Analysed tab on the Samples Sent screen.

6. Generate your survey report as normal.