

Guidance on Applying the Measurement Methods Matrix (MMM) in Using Comparison Results to Support CMCs

In the interest of supporting the calibration and measurement capabilities (CMCs) published by National Measurement and Designated Institutes (NMIs and DIs) on the Key Comparison Database (KCDB), the Consultative Committee on Ionizing Radiation Section II [CCRI(II)] developed a generic groupings table of radionuclides called the MMM. Using these groupings, CCRI(II) and corresponding technical committees in the Regional Metrology Organizations (RMOs) might leverage a select set of comparisons to support a wider range of CMCs for the measurement of radionuclides. The MMM has been designed for use by the NMIs and DIs¹.

For the official rules to CMC claims, refer to the latest “Rules for entering CMC Claims in Ionizing Radiation Metrology” located on the BIPM website:

<https://www.bipm.org/en/committees/cc/ccri/publications>

This document is meant to be used as a tool for evaluating CMCs but should not be construed to imply traceability of radionuclides, which still requires an unbroken chain of comparisons or calibrations against an appropriate standard.

- Radionuclides have been categorized by a primary measurement method (column in the MMM) as appropriate for a specific nuclide.
- Each method is described by the geometry, detector type, radiation, and detection mode. The expected, relative, minimum, expanded ($k = 2$) uncertainty is given in percent. The relative difficulty of measuring a specific nuclide by the indicated method (without consideration of source preparation issues) is denoted by a color-coded system: “red” for the most difficult, “yellow” for the moderately difficult, and “green” for the least difficult. It should be noted that a “red” nuclide by one method may be indicated as “green” by another.
- Several primary methods may be used for a given radionuclide; the application of more than one method for verification and confidence in results, as appropriate, is encouraged.
- In general, results from a comparison of a radionuclide indicated as red for a given primary measurement method may be used to support the calibration and measurement capability (CMC) claims for other nuclides of the same type (presuming similar decay complexities and measurement challenges) by that measurement method (i.e., other red, yellow and green-indicated nuclides for that method). Results from a comparison of a nuclide indicated as yellow will support claims for the yellow and green-indicated nuclides, and that of a green-indicated nuclide will support CMCs of only green-indicated nuclides by the same method. CMCs should, in all cases, be claimed only for those radionuclides measured by the submitting laboratory.

¹ See L. Karam, “Application of the CIPM MRA to radionuclide metrology”, *Metrologia* **44** S1 (2007), <https://doi.org/10.1088/0026-1394/44/4/S01>

- A comparison result of a radionuclide measured by a specific primary method generally will not be supportive of claims for that radionuclide measured by other primary methods.
- As comparisons are generally not undertaken for secondary methods specifically, a similar matrix for those methods is not practical. Extension of primary comparison results to support CMCs of secondary methods may be possible with demonstration of traceability of those methods to the primary method used in the comparison; the uncertainties would be expected to be greater than those achieved in the initial, primary-method comparison.
- When a secondary method is used in the context of a comparison, the results for that comparison can support the CMCs of only that nuclide as measured by that method.

