

## **REDUCING SAMPLES OF AGGREGATES TO TESTING SIZE FOP FOR AASHTO T 248**

### **Scope**

This procedure covers the reduction of samples to the appropriate size for testing in accordance with AASHTO T 248-11. Techniques are used that minimize variations in characteristics between test samples and field samples. Method A (Mechanical Splitter) and Method B (Quartering) are covered.

This FOP applies to fine aggregate (FA), coarse aggregate (CA), and mixes of the two, and may also be used on soils.

### **Apparatus**

#### **Method A – Mechanical Splitter**

Splitter chutes:

- Even number of equal width chutes
- Discharge alternately to each side
- Minimum of 8 chutes total for CA, 12 chutes total for FA
- Width:
  - Minimum 50 percent larger than largest particle
  - Maximum chute width of 19 mm (3/4 in.) for fine aggregate passing the 9.5 mm (3/8 in.) sieve

Feed control:

- Hopper or straightedge pan with a width equal to or slightly less than the overall width of the assembly of chutes
- Capable of feeding the splitter at a controlled rate

Splitter receptacles / pans:

- Capable of holding two halves of the sample following splitting

The splitter and accessory equipment shall be so designed that the sample will flow smoothly without restriction or loss of material.

### **Method B – Quartering**

- Straightedge scoop, shovel, or trowel
- Broom or brush
- Canvas or plastic sheet, approximately 2 by 3 m (6 by 9 ft)

### **Method Selection**

Samples of FA which are drier than the saturated surface dry (SSD) condition shall be reduced by a mechanical splitter according to Method A. As a quick determination, if the fine aggregate will retain its shape when molded with the hand, it is wetter than SSD.

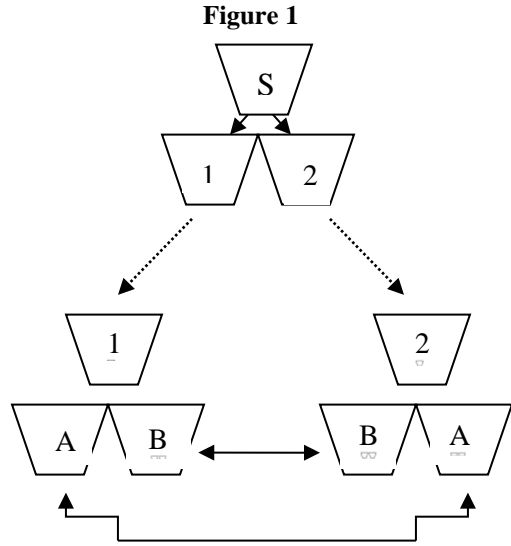
Samples of FA that are at SSD or wetter than SSD shall be reduced by Method B, or the entire sample may be dried to the SSD condition – using temperatures that do not exceed those specified for any of the tests contemplated – and then reduced to test sample size using Method A.

Samples of CA or mixtures of FA and CA may be reduced by either method. Method A is not recommended for FA / CA mixtures that adhere to the apparatus.

### **Procedure**

#### **Method A – Mechanical Splitter**

1. Place the sample in the hopper or pan and uniformly distribute it from edge to edge so that approximately equal amounts flow through each chute. The rate at which the sample is introduced shall be such as to allow free flowing through the chutes into the pans below.
2. Reduce the sample from one of the two pans as many times as necessary to reduce the sample to meet the minimum size specified for the intended test. The portion of the material collected in the other pan may be reserved for reduction in size for other tests.
3. As a check for effective reduction, determine the mass of each reduced portion. If the percent difference of the two masses is greater than 5 percent, corrective action must be taken. In lieu of the check for effective reduction, use the method illustrated in Figure 1.



Sample (S) is an amount greater than or equal to twice the mass needed for testing. Sample (S) is reduced in a mechanical splitter to yield parts (1) and (2)

Part (1) is further reduced yielding (A) and (B) while part (2) is reduced to yield (B) and (A).

Final testing sample is produced by combining alternate pans, i.e. A/A or B/B only.

**Calculation**

$$\frac{\text{Smaller Mass}}{\text{Larger Mass}} = \text{Ratio} \quad (1 - \text{ratio}) \times 100 = \% \text{ Difference}$$

Splitter check: 5127 g total sample mass

Splitter pan #1: 2583 g

Splitter pan #2: 2544 g

$$\frac{2544 \text{ g}}{2583 \text{ g}} = 0.985 \quad (1 - 0.985) \times 100 = 1.5\%$$

**Procedure**

**Method B – Quartering**

Use either of the following two procedures or a combination of both.

**Procedure # 1: Quartering on a clean, hard, level surface:**

1. Place the sample on a hard, clean, level surface where there will be neither loss of material nor the accidental addition of foreign material.

2. Mix the material thoroughly by turning the entire sample over a minimum of four times. With the last turning, shovel the entire sample into a conical pile by depositing each shovelful on top of the preceding one.
3. Flatten the conical pile to a uniform thickness and diameter by pressing down with a shovel. The diameter should be four to eight times the thickness.
4. Divide the flattened pile into four approximately equal quarters with a shovel or trowel.
5. Remove two diagonally opposite quarters, including all fine material, and brush the cleared spaces clean.
6. Successively mix and quarter the remaining material until the sample is reduced to the desired size.
7. The final test sample consists of two diagonally opposite quarters.

**Procedure # 2: Quartering on a canvas or plastic sheet:**

1. Place the sample on the sheet.
2. Mix the material thoroughly a minimum of four times by pulling each corner of the sheet horizontally over the sample toward the opposite corner. After the last turn, form a conical pile.
3. Flatten the conical pile to a uniform thickness and diameter by pressing down with a shovel. The diameter should be four to eight times the thickness.
4. Divide the flattened pile into four approximately equal quarters with a shovel or trowel, or, insert a stick or pipe beneath the sheet and under the center of the pile, then lift both ends of the stick, dividing the sample into two roughly equal parts. Remove the stick leaving a fold of the sheet between the divided portions. Insert the stick under the center of the pile at right angles to the first division and again lift both ends of the stick, dividing the sample into four roughly equal quarters.
5. Remove two diagonally opposite quarters, being careful to clean the fines from the sheet.
6. Successively mix and quarter the remaining material until the sample size is reduced to the desired size.
7. The final test sample consists of two diagonally opposite quarters.