

# Municipal incinerated bottom ash use as a cement component in concrete

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1 **TITLE: MUNICIPAL INCINERATED BOTTOM ASH USE AS A CEMENT COMPONENT IN CONCRETE**

2

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26 **ABSTRACT**

27 The characteristics of municipal incinerated bottom ash (MIBA) and its potential use as a  
28 cementitious component in concrete applications is examined through the analysis and evaluation of  
29 global experimental data. As raw feed in cement clinker production, MIBA can be incorporated at  
30 minor contents without compromising performance. Treatment of MIBA is required for use as  
31 cement components in cement, mortar and concrete to avoid damaging hydrogen gas expansive  
32 reactions arising due to the metallic aluminium in the ash. As such, thermal and chemical  
33 treatments, as well as tailored slow and wet grinding treatments, have been effective in improving  
34 performance. The hydrogen gas expansion associated with MIBA can beneficially contribute towards  
35 the lightweight properties required for aerated concrete, with the ash serving as an alternative to  
36 aerating agents and also contributing to strength development. Initial work on controlled low  
37 strength materials highlighted MIBA as a potential cement replacement material that can meet the  
38 low strength requirements.

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42 **Key Words:** Cement/cementitious materials, sustainability, mortar, aerated concrete.

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## 50 1. INTRODUCTION

51 Incineration of municipal solid waste (MSW) is being increasingly adopted as an alternative to  
52 landfilling, with rising incineration rates of 20, 23 and 27% reported in the 28 European countries in  
53 2006, 2010 and 2014, respectively (Eurostat, 2016). This management option results in a large  
54 reduction in the quantity of waste to manage, leaving behind residues approximately 30% by mass  
55 of the original waste, of which 80-90% is municipal incinerated bottom ash (MIBA). For every tonne  
56 of MSW incinerated, approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  tonne of MIBA is generated.

57

58 With the 27% incineration rate and total of 64 MT of MSW incinerated in 2014 in the European  
59 Union (Eurostat, 2016), it is estimated that approximately 16 MT of MIBA may be generated annually  
60 in these 28 countries. On the global scale, based on data gathered for 97% of the world's population,  
61 including records from around 700 waste-to-energy treatment plants, Waste Atlas (2013) calculated  
62 that 1.84 billion tonnes of MSW is produced worldwide per annum.

63

64 The quantity of MIBA produced presents a significant management challenge for governing bodies.  
65 Countries such as Belgium, Denmark, Germany and The Netherlands lead the way with extensive use  
66 of MIBA, primarily in as fill and in road pavement material (An et al., 2014; Qing and Yu, 2013; ISWA,  
67 2006). The practical use of MIBA in concrete related applications is much less developed, particularly  
68 on the focus of this paper, as a cementitious component in ground form. However, as the cement  
69 production process carries a high carbon footprint and driven by increasing importance on  
70 sustainability, there is significant incentive to develop this higher value use of MIBA. Indeed, there  
71 have been a number of other additions, such as fly ash and ground granulated blastfurnace slag, that  
72 have been successfully established as concrete constituents.

73

## 74 2. THE PROJECT

75 This paper presents a critical assessment of the characteristics of MIBA and its use as a cementitious  
76 component in concrete related applications, through the analysis and evaluation of the globally  
77 published experimental results on this subject. With substantial work undertaken, the coherent and  
78 incisive dissemination of the combined resources aims to assist in progressing the sustainable use of  
79 MIBA, covering its use as raw feed in cement clinker production and cement components in pastes,  
80 mortar, concrete, controlled low strength materials, self-compacting concrete and aerated concrete.

81

82 Significant work has been undertaken on the use of MIBA as a cement component in concrete  
83 applications and although only starting quite recently in 1998, the interest has been trending  
84 upwards, with a particularly large number of publications produced over the last three years (2014-  
85 2016). Research in this area has been undertaken in twelve countries worldwide, with the largest  
86 share of the work coming from Europe (59%), followed by Asia (38%) and North America (3%). The  
87 largest individual contributions have come from Italy, China and Taiwan. On the characteristics of  
88 MIBA, an overwhelming quantity of data was obtained, though to retain clarity in the text, the  
89 references containing solely numerical data on the material properties were listed in Appendices as  
90 supplementary data.

91

## 92 3. MATERIAL CHARACTERISTICS

### 93 3.1 Oxide Composition

94 The most abundant oxides found in MIBA are  $\text{SiO}_2$ ,  $\text{CaO}$ , and  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  whilst  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$ ,  $\text{Na}_2\text{O}$ ,  $\text{SO}_3$ ,  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$ ,  
95  $\text{MgO}$  and  $\text{K}_2\text{O}$  are also present in smaller quantities (references in Appendix A). These main oxides  
96 are similar to what is customarily found in common cementitious materials and as such, a ternary  
97 plot of their contents in worldwide bottom ash samples is presented in Figure 1 (based on data from  
98 the references in Appendix A).

99

100 It is evident that the bulk of the samples fall close to latent hydraulic and pozzolanic regions, with  
101 MIBA generally having a CaO content above the pozzolanic fly ash, but below the latent hydraulic  
102 GGBS. Comparing with fly ash in concrete, ASTM C618 (2015) specifies that the  $\text{SiO}_2+\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3+\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$   
103 content should be a minimum of 70% and 50% for Class F and Class C, and it was found that 16% and  
104 66% of MIBA samples satisfied these respective limits.

105

106 The bottom ash was found to have an average  $\text{SO}_3$  content of 2.4%, which satisfies the maximum 3%  
107 and 5% limits specified in EN 450 (2012) and ASTM C618 (2015) for fly ash in concrete. However,  
108 approximately 1/3 of MIBA exceeded the more stringent EN 450 (2012) limit and as such, could  
109 require treatment if used in concrete. Phosphate and magnesium can affect the setting behaviour  
110 and soundness of cementitious products, though the contents present in MIBA, average contents of  
111 2.4%  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$  and 1.9% MgO, are well below the 5% and 4% limits specified for fly ash in EN 450 (2012).  
112 Minor amounts of alkalis ( $\text{Na}_2\text{O}$ ) are also present in the ash, on average at contents of 2.9%. This is  
113 within the 5% limit outlined in EN 450 (2012) and similarly to fly ash, MIBA may have a net positive  
114 effect on alkali-silica behaviour as a cement replacement, due to alkaline dilution.

115

### 116 3.2 Loss On Ignition (LOI)

117 Loss of ignition values for the tested MIBA samples are presented in Figure 2 in ascending order  
118 (references in Appendix B). The material was determined to have an average LOI of 5.8%, though  
119 this is slightly distorted by a number of very high values. LOI limits vary for additions, though  
120 compared to fly ash requirements, 61% and 67% of the MIBA samples satisfied the respective  
121 requirements of 6% in the American ASTM C618 (2015) and 7% in the UK National Annex to EN 197  
122 (2011). As excessive organics can impair the strength and durability of the concrete, this parameter  
123 is important to monitor after the incineration stage, in assessing the potential for use of MIBA as a  
124 cementitious component.

125

126 **3.3 Mineralogy**

127 Amorphous contents from 15-70% have been reported for quenched MIBA (Bayuseno and Schmahl,  
128 2010; Dhir et al., 2002; Inkaew et al., 2016; Paine et al, 2002; Rubner et al., 2008 and Wei et al.,  
129 2011), suggesting that the material may have some degree of reactivity when ground to a cement  
130 fraction. Quartz is the most abundant mineral found in the ash, followed by calcite, hematite,  
131 magnetite and gehlenite which are frequently present and then a wide range of other silicates,  
132 aluminates, aluminosilicates, sulfates, oxides and phosphates that appear infrequently (references in  
133 Appendix C).

134

135 **3.4 Element Composition**

136 Data on the element composition of the MIBA samples is presented in Table 1, sorted from highest  
137 to lowest average contents. For use as a cementitious component, the chloride and metallic  
138 aluminium contents are particularly important. Chloride limits of 0.1% are specified in EN 197 (2011)  
139 for common cements and EN 450 (2012) for fly ash in concrete and as such, the average value of  
140 0.9% in MIBA indicates that further treatment would be required to reduce this to the accepted  
141 level.

142

143 The issue of the metallic aluminium is a problem more specific to MIBA use in concrete and has been  
144 highlighted as a key concern by Tyrer (2013), Pecqueur et al. (2001), Muller and Rubner (2006) and  
145 Weng et al. (2015). Aluminium reacts in the alkaline environment in cement and is accompanied by  
146 formation of hydrogen gas bubbles, leading to expansive behaviour and spalling damage that can  
147 greatly compromise the concrete performance. In aerated concrete, the expansive reaction is  
148 advantageous, though in the other applications, treatment is suggested to either remove the  
149 metallic aluminium or dissipate the expansive reactions before its use in concrete.

150

151 The presence of soluble lead, zinc, phosphates and copper in MIBA may potentially affect the setting  
152 behaviour of concrete, as these constituents are sometime used in admixtures as set retarders.

153

### 154 3.5 Density

155 Specific gravity results for MIBA are presented in Figure 3, with the samples divided into (a)  
156 unspecified or screened to remove oversized fraction or sieved as aggregate, (b) subjected to metal  
157 recovery treatment and (c) ground as cementitious components. Based on the total samples, the  
158 material had an average specific gravity of 2.36 (references in Appendix E), however the process of  
159 recovering the denser metal fractions led to a decrease, and the process of grinding, which is a  
160 prerequisite for its use a cementitious component, led to an increase due to the smaller, more  
161 compact particles and lower porosity. In ground form (average specific gravity of 2.63), the density  
162 of the material is significantly lower than the typical value of 3.15 for Portland cement, though  
163 above to the 2.3 value of fly ash (Jackson and Dhir, 1996).

164

### 165 3.6 Grading

166 After incineration, the residual MIBA contains a mix of metallics, ceramics, stones, glass fragments  
167 and unburnt organic matter and despite the term “ash”, can contain large particles up to 100mm in  
168 size. The material typically then goes through a screening process to remove the oversized fraction.  
169 For use as a cementitious component, the material is subsequently ground into powder size. Particle  
170 size distribution curves for screening MIBA and samples ground for use in concrete are presented in  
171 Figure 4 (references in Appendix F) and show that the ground ash achieved well graded distributions  
172 comparable to Portland cement and fly ash.

173

174 The grindability of MIBA has not been a point of focus in the reported data on the characterisation  
175 of MIBA. Metals tend to have a high degree of hardness and it is expected that these constituents in  
176 MIBA would be more difficult to grind. However, with common ferrous and non-ferrous metal



177 recovery treatments of the ash after incineration, combined with the previously highlighted metallic  
178 aluminium expansion concerns that may necessitate further treatment, the quantity of the metal  
179 constituents may be notably reduced. It is interesting to note that in a study on alternative energy  
180 sources in cement manufacturing, Albino et al. (2011) reported that the use of MSW would lead to  
181 savings in coal grinding energy costs.

182

### 183 3.7 Morphology

184 The ash contains irregular, angular shaped particles with a porous microstructure, arising from the  
185 heating and cooling process during combustion (references in Appendix G). In this as-produced form,  
186 the higher specific surface area, porosity and associated water absorption properties suggest that  
187 the material would lead to an increase in the water demand of the concrete.

188

## 189 4. USE AS A CEMENT COMPONENT IN CONCRETE RELATED APPLICATIONS

### 190 4.1 Raw Feed in Cement Clinker Production

191 The use of MIBA in cement clinker manufacture can reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and contribute to the  
192 clinker compounds formation with its calcium, silicon, alumina and iron oxide contents. A description  
193 of the work undertaken with MIBA in this area is presented in Table 2, outlining its use as a minor  
194 component, at contents from 2-10% of the cement clinker feed.

195

196 To ensure the same main clinker phases are produced with MIBA, the SiO<sub>2</sub>, CaO, Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> and Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>  
197 contents and source materials were precisely regulated. As such, MIBA clinkers had chemical  
198 compositions comparable to the control (Table 2), however, at the upper end of the tested MIBA  
199 contents, the concurrent build-up of minor constituents such as P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>, SO<sub>3</sub> led to the suppression of  
200 C<sub>3</sub>S formation, which consequently affected strength and setting behaviour, though improved  
201 sulfate susceptibility. Chlorides in the ash can also lead to corrosion of the kiln equipment in the long

202 term and as a result, MIBA samples used by Pan et al. (2008) were washed prior to their inclusion in  
203 the cement clinker feed.

204

205 Based on the above data, it is expected that MIBA could be viably incorporated in the cement clinker  
206 feed at low contents, suggested up to about 5%, without compromising performance. There may  
207 also be scope for higher MIBA contents to be incorporated, if the  $P_2O_5$ ,  $SO_3$  and  $Cl^-$  contents of the  
208 material are particularly low. With the vast size of the cement manufacturing industry, reported to  
209 produce 250 million tonnes in the European Union countries in 2015 (Cembureau, 2016), it is  
210 projected that around 80% of the ash generated in these countries would be consumed though this  
211 use alone, if this 5% MIBA content was adopted throughout.

212

213 Of further interest, there was also a number of additional studies that utilized combined ash  
214 (municipal incinerator bottom ash and fly ash) as part of the raw feed for cement clinker production,  
215 which are listed as follows: Kikuchi (2001); Shih et al. (2003); Torii et al. (2003); Wiles and Shephard  
216 (1999).

217

## 218 4.2 Cement Component

219 This section examines the use of MIBA in ground form as a binder component in cement pastes.

220 Despite serious concerns regarding potentially damaging expansive reactions arising from the  
221 presence of metallic aluminium (covered in section 3), much of the work undertaken did not include  
222 additional treatment of MIBA beyond the standard grinding (Fernandez et al. 1998; Filipponi et al.,  
223 2003; Giampaolo et al., 2002; Kim et al. 2016; Kokalj et al., 2005; Polettini et al., 2000; Whittaker et  
224 al., 2009). Others adopted chemical activation or thermal treatments for general improvement of  
225 the mechanical properties (Lin and Lin, 2006; Lin et al., 2008, Onori et al, 2011; Polettini et al., 2005;  
226 Polettini et al., 2009), whilst Tang et al. (2014b/2016) carried out a series of grinding + thermal  
227 treatments on MIBA specifically aiming to reduce the damaging expansive behaviour.

228

229 Compressive strength results are presented in Figure 5 for cement pastes using MIBA after (a)  
230 standard processing (typically grinding) and (b) chemical activation with  $\text{CaCl}_2$ ,  $\text{CaSO}_4$  or high  
231 temperature treatment. The large strength losses evident with only standard grinding treatment can  
232 likely be attributed, for the most part, to the detrimental expansion behaviour arising due to the  
233 reactive metallic aluminium in MIBA. As such, it is expected that additional treatment of the material  
234 would be essential for its use in this application. One exception in Figure 5 (a) (Kokalj et al., 2005) did  
235 manage to achieve good strength performance, though this was because this ash sample originated  
236 from a light fraction of MSW that contained minimal metals.

237

238 Specific testing of the hydrogen gas development confirmed the increase in expansive gases with  
239 increasing MIBA, reaching 4% of the volume of the tested cylinder at the highest tested 30% MIBA  
240 content (Kim et al., 2016). Thermal treatment of MIBA to reduce the metallic aluminium was  
241 effective when combined with a subsequent lower speed grinding technique that allows the ductile  
242 metallic aluminium to form into plate shapes and be subsequently removed during sieving, thus  
243 greatly reducing the metallic Al (Tang et al., 2016).

244

245 The additional chemical or thermal treatments have been effective in improving the MIBA strength  
246 performance, Figure 5 (b), though were not specifically focused on metallic aluminium reduction.  
247 The chemical activators alter the mineralogical composition to promote greater formation of  
248 hydration products, whilst the thermal treatment converts the ash into a highly glassy material with  
249 enhanced reactivity. Part of the chemical activation process involved a low heat treatment at  $90^\circ\text{C}$   
250 for 3 hours of the slurry of ground MIBA + activator. The best results were achieved with  $\text{CaCl}_2$  as the  
251 activator, exceeding the control strength at times, followed by  $\text{CaSO}_4$ , whilst  $\text{Na}_2\text{SiO}_3 \cdot 9\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ,  $\text{NaOH}$ ,  
252  $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4$ ,  $\text{KOH}$  and  $\text{K}_2\text{SO}_4$  (results not shown) were not effective. Pastes using melted MIBA slag  
253 achieved compressive strengths close to the control at cement replacement levels up to 20%.

254

255 The large strength losses with the standard processed MIBA were symptomatic of poor overall  
256 performance, as corresponding reductions in density, along with increases in porosity, absorption  
257 and additional cracking problems have also been evident in these pastes (Fernandez et al., 1998; Kim  
258 et al., 2016; Polettini et al., 2000; Tang et al., 2014b; Tang et al., 2016).

259

260 Heat flow analysis showed that MIBA, at contents up to 40%, led to a retardation of the hydration of  
261 the pastes and lower maximum heat releases (Onori et al., 2011; Tang et al., 2014b; Tang et al.,  
262 2016; Whittaker et al., 2009), attributed to the organic fraction and presence of zinc and phosphate.  
263 This was also resulted in increases of 7-57% in initial and final setting times (Kim et al., 2016;  
264 Whittaker et al., 2009), including with the melted MIBA slag (Lin and Lin, 2006; Lin et al., 2008).

265

266 The material did make a tangible contribution to the hydration reactions, which was quantified from  
267 pozzolanic activity tests. Frattini and lime saturation tests, which directly measured the quantity of  
268  $\text{Ca(OH)}_2$  in the presence of MIBA, revealed that the material generally satisfied the pozzolanic  
269 activity requirements and when compared to established materials, performed similar to fly ash and  
270 natural pozzolan (Fernandez et al., 1998; Filipponi et al., 2003; Giampaolo et al., 2002; Polettini et al.,  
271 2005; Polettini et al., 2009). The melting treatment was effective in increasing the amorphous phases  
272 in MIBA (Lin and Lin, 2006; Lin et al., 2008), whilst chemical activation was also found to further  
273 support the development of pozzolanic reaction in the pastes (Onori et al., 2011).

274

### 275 4.3 Mortar

276 As a cementitious component in mortar mixes, MIBA has been subjected to the requisite grinding  
277 processing, whilst at times, additional thermal treatment has been applied to the material. Using  
278 MIBA as cement replacement at contents up to 50%, the effects on the mortar fresh properties are  
279 presented in Table 3. The ash generally led to minor decreases in the mix flow values, which can be

280 attributed to the irregular particle shape and high porosity of the material. The additional thermal  
281 treatment did not significantly alter the effect of MIBA on the workability. Moderate increases in  
282 setting times were evident with MIBA, which is expected when using pozzolanic materials as a  
283 replacement of Portland cement. The lower specific gravity of MIBA led to a slight reduction in its  
284 fresh unit weight, whilst its higher water retention resulted in lower bleeding.

285

286 On the hardened properties, the effect of MIBA as a binder on the mortar compressive strength  
287 development with age is shown in Figure 6 (a) using ash samples subjected to the standard grinding  
288 treatment and Figure 6 (b) for samples with an additional thermal treatment. The results are  
289 presented as a percentage of the control at the same age and as such positively sloped lines imply  
290 that the pozzolanic activity of the material is contributing to greater later age strength development.

291

292 This greater rate of later strength development has been evident in most MIBA mixes. As is generally  
293 the case with pozzolanic materials, due to the delayed pozzolanic reaction, lower early age strengths  
294 were evident, however, the thermal treatment (Figure 6(b)) improved the material reactivity,  
295 leading to both higher early age strengths and long term strengths that exceeded the control mix.

296 Additional work by Carsana et al. (2016) and Tang et al. (2016), with treatments specifically aiming to  
297 reduce the metallic aluminium, showed that the associated expansive reaction can have a drastic  
298 impact on the strength performance. Reductions in the metallic aluminium and much improved  
299 mechanical performance has been achieved using a combined metal separation + wet grinding  
300 treatment (Carsana et al., 2016) and a combined thermal + lower speed grinding treatment (Tang et  
301 al., 2016).

302

303 The wet grinding step is particularly effective, for the reason that the aluminium fractions become  
304 more exposed as the particles fragment during grinding (Carsana et al., 2016) and in the alkaline  
305 environment, the expansive reactions develop from the formation of aluminium hydroxide and

306 hydrogen gas and eventually are depleted before the material is introduced into the cement  
307 mixture. A slower grinding speed can also be beneficial as it allows better removal of the dust-like  
308 particulates that reside on the MIBA particle surface (which are believed to be the most reactive  
309 fractions) by means of inter-particle friction, and as a result, the subsequent expansive reactions in  
310 the cement environment are reduced (Tang et al., 2016).

311

312 In addition to hydrogen gas expansion, the effect of MIBA on a number of other aspects of the  
313 mortar durability has been tested:

314

315 **Drying shrinkage:** Using ground MIBA, the drying shrinkage of mortar mixes increased with  
316 increasing MIBA content, accompanied by increases in porosity. However, after thermal treatment  
317 (max temperature of 1450°C for 12 hours), the opposite behaviour was evident, as MIBA mixes had  
318 lower drying shrinkage compared to the control, due to the lower porosity and denser  
319 microstructure associated with the greater pozzolanic reactions and filling effects (Cheng, 2012;  
320 Cheng et al., 2011).

321

322 **Chlorides and sulfates ingress:** The use of thermally treated (1500°C for 4 hours) MIBA as a cement  
323 replacement in mortar reduced the depth of penetration of chlorides and sulfates (Saccani et al.  
324 2005). This again, can be linked to the lower porosity of the MIBA mixes.

325

326 **Alkali aggregate reaction:** Accelerated tests on alkali silica reactivity showed that thermally treated  
327 MIBA, as a replacement of 20 and 30% of the cement, led to a significant reduction in the mortar  
328 expansion (Saccani et al., 2005), as is typically expected with the use of pozzolanic materials due to  
329 the dilution in the alkalinity.

330

#### 331 4.4 Concrete

332 The use of MIBA as a cement component in concrete mixes is expected to show similar behaviour to  
333 its use in mortar, with the potential hydrogen gas expansion likely to dictate that additional  
334 treatment of the ash, after grinding, should be undertaken. Concrete compressive strength results  
335 are presented in Figure 7, in the same manner as the mortar results in Figure 6, using MIBA (as  
336 binder) subjected to (a) standard processing and (b) an additional thermal treatment.

337

338 The concrete results with MIBA appear more positive than the mortar counterparts, achieving later  
339 age strengths comparable to the control in some cases (Bertolini et al., 2004/2005 (wet ground);  
340 Juric et al., 2006; Jaturapitakkul and Cheerarot, 2003). Hydrogen gas expansive reactions were  
341 surprisingly only reported by Bertolini et al. (2004), with the dry-ground MIBA. The wet grinding  
342 process (a slurry with a 1:1 solid/liquid ratio) led to the dissipation of the expansive reactions  
343 (formation of visible gas bubbles). With a subsequent rest period before the use of MIBA (two days  
344 was sufficient for Bertolini et al., 2004/2005, though this may vary), the metallic aluminium reactions  
345 can be depleted, thus leading to drastic strength and density improvements. The additional thermal  
346 treatment, though a more energy intensive option (1450°C for 1 hour, Cheng et al., 2011), produced  
347 a more reactive MIBA slag due to its higher amorphous fraction, which also led to improvements in  
348 the compressive strength (Figure 7(b)).

349

350 Mixed findings emerged regarding the effect of MIBA on the concrete mix consistence. With 30% of  
351 the cement replaced, the slump decreased from 60mm to 0mm with the finer wet ground MIBA ( $d_{50}$   
352  $3\mu\text{m}$ ), compared to an increase to 110mm with the dry ground MIBA ( $d_{50}$   $15\mu\text{m}$ ) (Bertolini et al.,  
353 2004/2005). Additional slump increases from 162mm (control) to between 167-187mm for ground  
354 and thermally treated MIBA (passing  $74\mu\text{m}$ ) were evident (Cheng et al., 2011), though a contrasting  
355 drop from 105mm (control) to 44mm with 15% MIBA (unspecified fineness) was also reported (Juric  
356 et al., 2006). Differences in the ash fineness after grinding contributed somewhat to variability in the

357 workability, with increased fineness found to lead to lower slumps, whilst the moisture content of  
358 MIBA prior to its use is another important variable to consider. The irregular shape of the ash  
359 particles and porous microstructure of the material, also point towards an expected reduction in the  
360 mix consistence with MIBA, for a given water content.

361

362 On the concrete permeation properties, the inclusion of 20% ground MIBA reduced the initial  
363 surface absorption test (ISAT) value from 0.6 to 0.3 ml/m<sup>2</sup>s. Additional thermal treatment was also  
364 beneficial in achieving a denser concrete microstructure due to the increased pozzolanic activity  
365 (Cheng et al., 2011).

366

367 As a measure of the concrete corrosion resistance, open circuit potential (OCP) results matched up  
368 consistently with the compressive strength performance (see Figure 7), with ground + melted MIBA  
369 mixes performing similar to the control and just ground MIBA mixes showing greater susceptibility  
370 (Cheng et al., 2011). This same behaviour with MIBA mixes was also evident in rapid chloride  
371 penetration tests measuring the electric current passing through (Cheng et al., 2011). Indirect  
372 electrical resistivity and direct chloride apparent diffusion coefficient results revealed that the higher  
373 strength wet ground MIBA mixes had greater resistance than the control, whilst the lower strength  
374 dry ground MIBA was less resistant (Bertolini et al, 2004/2005). Overall, the initial testing suggests  
375 that for equivalent compressive strength, mixes with MIBA as binder will deliver resistance to  
376 chloride ingress on par or greater than the control PC mix.

377

#### 378 **4.5 Controlled Low Strength Material (CLSM)**

379 Controlled low strength materials are used as an alternative to soils as backfill material, with their  
380 main characteristics including high flowability, self-compacting, self-curing properties and strengths  
381 controlled to low levels to allow future excavation. As outlined in the American Concrete Institute



382 guidance report on CLSM (ACI, 2005), these products typically contain fly ash as filler, low contents  
383 of cement and coarse and fine aggregate, with water.

384

385 The initial work undertaken with MIBA adopted a more unconventional approach using a mix of  
386 dewatered sludge (DS) + calcium sulfoaluminate cement (CSA) + water as the control, with MIBA  
387 (ground to less than 4mm) replacing up to 80% of the cement (Zhen et al., 2012/2013). The focus of  
388 the testing was on the compressive strength development and the results are presented in Figure 8.  
389 CLSMs with mix proportions of 1 or 4 units of CSA (or CSA+MIBA) per 1 unit of dewater sludge have  
390 been produced. A few of the MIBA samples used were subjected to an additional thermal treatment  
391 at 900°C for 1 hour. Other important properties such as flowability and compactability have not  
392 been covered.

393

394 The above CLSMs produced using MIBA appear more suited towards structural applications as all  
395 mixes greatly exceeded the 0.3 MPa (50 psi) manual excavation guidance limit and indeed all but  
396 two (CLSMs with 80% MIBA and the lower total CSA+MIBA proportion) exceeded the machine  
397 excavation limit of 2.1 MPa (ACI, 2005). Accompanying XRD, TG-DSC and SEM-EDX analysis of the  
398 microstructure and mineralogy by Zhen et al. (2012/2013) suggested that MIBA did contribute to the  
399 strength performance, despite the consistent strength decreases with increasing MIBA contents in  
400 the 1 DS: 4 CSA+MIBA: 1.6 water mixes. However, the use of MIBA or other pozzolanic material with  
401 CSA may not be an effective combination as this cement type is less alkaline and does not produce  
402 the calcium hydroxide needed for pozzolanic reactions (Pera and Ambroise, 2006). The increase in  
403 strength with low MIBA contents in the lower CSA+MIBA mixes may be contributed by improved  
404 mechanical filling. Thermal treatment of MIBA for use in CLSMs did not have a favourable effect on  
405 the mechanical performance.

406

## 407 4.6 Aerated Concrete

408 Aerated concrete appears to be an ideal application for MIBA as the hydrogen gas expansive  
409 reactions arising from its metallic aluminium can make a positive contribution towards the desired  
410 low density properties. In the work undertaken, MIBA has served as a valuable aerating agent, whilst  
411 also making a useful contribution to the silica required for strength development.

412

413 Prior to the implementation of MIBA in aerated mixes, the response of the material with varying  
414 levels of alkaline solution (0.0016 - 1 mol/L of NaOH or Ca(OH)<sub>2</sub>) has been examined by measuring  
415 the hydrogen gas production at temperatures from 40-70°C (Chen et al., 2014; Song et al., 2015;  
416 Song et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2016, Yang et al., 2015). The results were converted to a standard  
417 measure of volume of hydrogen gas per gram of powder at 1 atm (pressure), 23°C and the following  
418 findings emerged:

- 419 • The hydrogen gas volume increased with MIBA fineness. This can be attributed to the increased  
420 specific surface area and greater exposure of the reactive components associated with higher  
421 particle fineness. The finest MIBA fraction (average particle size of 23.2 µm) produced  
422 approximately 1% of the gas produced by aluminium powder per gram in equivalent conditions.
- 423 • Hydrogen gas production increased both as the temperature rose and conditions became more  
424 alkaline (higher alkaline solution molarity), though comparable results were achieved with either  
425 NaOH and Ca(OH)<sub>2</sub> as alkaline solution.

426

427 The mix designs for aerated concrete containing MIBA are presented in Table 4, along with the  
428 density and compressive strength results. Differing approaches have been adopted, using MIBA as a  
429 replacement of cement, coal fly ash or circulating fluidized bed combustion (CFBC) fly ash, along with  
430 variations in the other constituents, alkaline solutions and molarity and the water content.

431

432 As a cement replacement, increasing MIBA and NaOH molarity led to increasing porosity and  
433 associated reductions in density and compressive strength (Chen et al., 2014; Song et al., 2016; Yang  
434 et al., 2015), though the density was affected more by the MIBA content, whilst the alkaline solution  
435 molarity had a greater influence on strength. The substitution of MIBA for coal and CFBC fly ashes  
436 also resulted in reductions in density and strength due to the increased expansive reactions and  
437 porosity (Song et al., 2015; Yang et al., 2015). The strength to density ratio for the mixes containing  
438 MIBA is lower than those with coal and CFBC fly ashes, though is higher than those using aluminium  
439 powder (1g of MIBA for 0.01g of Al powder based on the previous hydrogen gas experiments). As  
440 such, the use of MIBA and these fly ashes appears to be an ideal combination that can produce the  
441 desired low density, with better strength than the Al powder mixes, and at the same time, save the  
442 costs of the expensive aluminium aerating agent.

443

444 The drying shrinkage of MIBA aerated concrete was found to stabilise at around 15 and 20 days  
445 respectively, with the CFBC fly ash and coal fly ash mixes. Consistent increases in shrinkage were  
446 evident with increasing MIBA content, due to the higher porosity and associated increased ease of  
447 moisture loss and the lower resistance to movement due to the lower strength. Despite this  
448 increased susceptibility, the drying shrinkage values of all MIBA aerated concrete mixes were within  
449 the targeted 0.50 mm/m Chinese National Standard limit (Song et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2016).

450

## 451 5. CONCLUSIONS

452 The chemical composition of MIBA, with main oxides of  $\text{SiO}_2$ ,  $\text{CaO}$  and  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ , combined with its  
453 amorphous fraction, indicates that it may have pozzolanic properties in ground form. The ash  
454 contains notable contents of  $\text{SO}_3$ ,  $\text{Cl}$  and organic matter that should be monitored and treatment  
455 may be required at times to limit negative impacts on concrete performance. Metallic aluminium in  
456 MIBA is also a key concern that may demand treatment to avoid damaging expansive reactions. In  
457 ground form, MIBA was found to have an average specific gravity of 2.6, placing it above fly ash and

458 below Portland cement. Its irregular shaped particles, porous microstructure and higher absorption  
459 properties indicate that MIBA may lead to a rise in the concrete water demand.

460

461 As raw feed in cement clinker production, MIBA can be viably used at low contents, recommended  
462 up to 5%, to produce cement clinker comparable to the control. At higher MIBA contents, the build-  
463 up of  $P_2O_5$  and  $SO_3$  affects the setting and strength development. Washing treatment may also be  
464 implemented to reduce long term corrosion of the kiln equipment due to the chlorides in MIBA.

465

466 As a cementitious component in paste, mortar and concrete mixes, treatment of MIBA beyond  
467 standard grinding is needed to avoid expansive reactions and associated negative effects on  
468 strength, density, absorption and cracking, arising from the metallic aluminium in the ash. Thermal  
469 and chemical activation treatments have been effective in improving strength performance, whilst  
470 tailored slow and wet grinding techniques targeting the removal of metallic aluminium also resulted  
471 in drastic increases in performance. MIBA contributed to strength development as a partial cement  
472 replacement, achieving long terms strengths greater than the control mortar and concrete mixes,  
473 after suitable treatment. Increases in the water demand and setting times were evident when MIBA  
474 was used as a binder in mortar and concrete. Products containing the appropriately treated ash  
475 performed comparable or better than the control mixes at equivalent strengths, with regards to  
476 permeability, drying shrinkage, chloride and sulfate ingress and alkali aggregate reaction.

477

478 MIBA appears suited for use in aerated concrete as the hydrogen gas expansive reactions can  
479 contribute towards the desired low density properties, serving as an alternative to costly aerating  
480 agents such as aluminium powder and also as a source of silica for strength development. The  
481 material has been incorporated in varying mix designs as a replacement of cement, coal fly ash or  
482 circulating fluidized bed combustion (CFBC) fly ash, achieving large reductions in density. The use of  
483 MIBA in combination with coal fly ash also achieved a superior strength-to-density ratio compared to

484 mixes with aluminium powder, in addition to saving the costs of the aerating agent. Initial work on  
485 controlled low strength materials also presented MIBA as a potential cement replacement that can  
486 meet the low strength requirements of this application.

487

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## 651 TABLES

652 Table 1: Element composition of MIBA (references in Appendix D)

653 Table 2: Description of the work undertaken and emerging findings on the use of MIBA as part of the  
654 raw feed for cement clinker production

655 Table 3: Fresh properties of mortars using MIBA as a cementitious component

656 Table 4: Mix designs and density and compressive strength results for aerated concrete

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Table 1: Element composition of MIBA (references in Appendix D)

ELEMENT	SAMPLE NO.	AVERAGE, mg/kg	ST DEV, mg/kg	CV, %
Si	13	210893	64046	30
Ca	31	117750	59238	50
Fe	36	53455	36393	68
Al	35	44047	15634	35
Na	24	22812	16526	72
Mg	29	14967	8664	58
Cl	37	8944	9443	106
K	29	8256	4716	57
Ti	12	6632	5553	84
S	27	5184	2208	43
P	10	4866	3987	82
Zn	78	4044	2974	74
Cu	76	3071	2796	91
Pb	73	1641	1205	73
Ba	31	1312	910	69
Mn	41	921	599	65
Cr	77	398	325	82
Sr	17	379	179	47
Sb	18	253	714	282
Ni	58	182	132	73
V	22	167	286	172
Co	24	50	104	207
As	46	50	61	123
Mo	19	28	27	99
Cd	50	14	23	159
Hg	17	1.4	4.0	290

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Table 2: Description of the work undertaken and emerging findings on the use of MIBA as part of the raw feed for cement clinker production

PUBLICATION	WORK UNDERTAKEN AND FINDINGS
Krammart and Tangersirikul (2003/2004)	Trials with cement clinkers containing 5% and 10% MIBA. MIBA clinkers had similar chemical compositions to the control. Lower compressive strengths were evident, though less susceptibility to sulfate expansion.
Lam et al. (2010/2011)	MIBA at content of 2,4,6,8 % in cement raw feed. Clinker containing up to 6% MIBA showed phase composition similar to PC, though 8% led to suppression of the main phases (decreased C <sub>3</sub> S) due to P <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub> and SO <sub>3</sub> contents.
Li et al. (2016)	2 clinkers: 1 <sup>st</sup> - control, 2 <sup>nd</sup> - 9% MIBA + lower limestone, sandstone, fly ash, slag %. Major chemical components of the MIBA and control clinkers were similar, though the MIBA blend had higher alkalis (Na <sub>2</sub> O and K <sub>2</sub> O) and P <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub> contents.
Pan et al. (2008)	Cement clinker produced using 3.5% washed MIBA. Allowable MIBA was limited by its chloride content. Setting time increased with MIBA, whilst compressive strength was similar to the control clinker when P <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub> was limited.

PC – Portland cement clinker

Table 3: Fresh properties of mortars using MIBA as a cementitious component

REFERENCE	MORTAR FRESH PROPERTIES
<b><u>Consistence</u></b>	
Cheng et al. (2011)	MIBA ground <74µm. Minor decreases in flow from 131mm (0% MIBA) to between 109-123mm with 10-40% MIBA. Though all mixes were deemed to have satisfactory workability.
Saccani et al. (2005)	MIBA thermally treated (1500°C, 4hrs), quenched and ground. Increased flow table values of 75mm (20% MIBA) and 70mm (30% MIBA) compared to control 60mm (0% MIBA).
Tang et al. (2014a/2016)	MIBA ground or ground + thermal treatment (550/700°C). Thermal treatment didn't have a significant effect on flow. All flows with 20% MIBA were within +5 to -10 mm of the control.
Whittaker et al. (2009)	MIBA ground to 2µm. More sizeable reduction in flow table results from the control 190mm, to 167mm (10% MIBA) and 136mm (40% MIBA)
Zhang and Zhao (2014)	MIBA ground to 40µm. Slight increases in the water demand with increasing MIBA, rising from 26.1% (0% MIBA) to 30.1% (50% MIBA)
<b><u>Setting Time</u></b>	
Cheng (2012)	MIBA ground < 74µm or melted (1450°C) + ground. Initial and final setting times increased (up to 30% longer with 40% MIBA). Melting didn't significantly alter the rate of delay.
Saccani et al. (2005)	MIBA vitrified (1500°C, 4hrs) + quenched + ground. With 30% MIBA, initial sett increased from 60 to 100 mins and final set from 170 to 235 mins.
Zhang and Zhao (2014)	MIBA ground < 40µm. Increase in initial and final setting times of approximately 40% for the highest tested 50% MIBA content.
<b><u>Fresh Unit Weight</u></b>	
Cheng (2012)	MIBA ground < 74µm. Minor decrease in the fresh unit weight with up to 40% MIBA, also accompanied by minor increases in the mix air contents.
<b><u>Bleeding</u></b>	
Cheng (2012)	MIBA ground < 74µm. Decrease in bleeding with MIBA from 0.1988 mL/cm <sup>2</sup> (for control 0% MIBA) to 0.1395 mL/cm <sup>2</sup> (40% MIBA)

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Table 4: Mix designs and density and compressive strength results for aerated concrete

MIX CONSTITUENTS					RESULTS		
<b>A. Cement Replaced (Chen et al., 2014; Song et al., 2016; Yang et al., 2015)</b>							
<b>Other variables:</b> Alkaline solution type and molarity, L/S ratio							
Cement	MIBA	Sand	Alkali solution	L/S ratio	Density, kg/m <sup>3</sup>	Comp Strength, MPa	
4	1	5	Water	0.175	1554	19.5	
4	1	5	0.01 mol/L NaOH	0.175	1512	16.0	
4	1	5	0.1 mol/L NaOH	0.175	1444	12.5	
4	1	5	1 mol/L NaOH	0.175	1324	5.7	
3	2	5	1 mol/L NaOH	0.35	1056	2.7	
2	3	5	1 mol/L NaOH	0.35	932	1.5	
<b>B. Coal Fly Ash Replaced (Song et al., 2015; Yang et al., 2015)</b>							
<b>Other variables:</b> Comparison to Al powder							
Cement	MIBA	Coal fly ash	Al powder	Lime /Gypsum	Water	Density, kg/m <sup>3</sup>	Comp strength, MPa
10	0	67	0	20/3	65	1074	13.9
10	5	62	0	20/3	65	846 (↓ 21%)	9.7 (↓ 30%)
10	10	57	0	20/3	65	728 (↓ 32%)	8.4 (↓ 40%)
10	20	47	0	20/3	65	673 (↓ 37%)	7.2 (↓ 49%)
10	30	37	0	20/3	65	637 (↓ 41%)	6.1 (↓ 56%)
10	0	67	0.05	20/3	65	831 (↓ 23%)	7.7 (↓ 45%)
10	0	67	0.1	20/3	65	673 (↓ 37%)	6.5 (↓ 53%)
10	0	67	0.2	20/3	65	603 (↓ 44%)	4.1 (↓ 71%)
10	0	67	0.3	20/3	65	511 (↓ 52%)	2.9 (↓ 79%)
<b>C. CFBC fly ash replaced (Wang et al., 2016)</b>							
<b>Other Variables:</b> None							
Cement	MIBA	CFBC fly ash	Lime	Water	Density, kg/m <sup>3</sup>	Comp strength, MPa	
10	0	70	20	65	1116	18.1	
10	5	65	20	65	868 (↓ 22%)	17.1 (↓ 5%)	
10	10	60	20	65	799 (↓ 28%)	13.2 (↓ 27%)	
10	20	50	20	65	656 (↓ 41%)	8.9 (↓ 51%)	
10	30	40	20	65	613 (↓ 45%)	6.8 (↓ 63%)	

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718 FIGURES

719 Figure 1: Ternary plot of the composition of the main oxides in MIBA

720 Figure 2: LOI values of MIBA samples in ascending order

721 Figure 3: Density results of MIBA for (a) unspecified treatment/screened/sieved samples (b) samples  
722 subjected to metal recovery treatment and (c) samples ground to cement size fraction.

723 Figure 4: Particle size distribution curves of MIBA samples screened and ground as a cementitious  
724 component

725 Figure 5: Effect on cement paste compressive strength with MIBA subjected to (a) standard  
726 processing and (b) additional chemical or thermal treatments.

727 Figure 6: Compressive strength development of mortars using MIBA subjected to (a) standard  
728 processing and (b) additional thermal treatment.

729 Figure 7: Compressive strength development of concrete using MIBA subjected to (a) standard  
730 processing and (b) additional thermal treatment.

731 Figure 8: Compressive strength of CLSM after 28 days using MIBA as a cement (CSA) replacement

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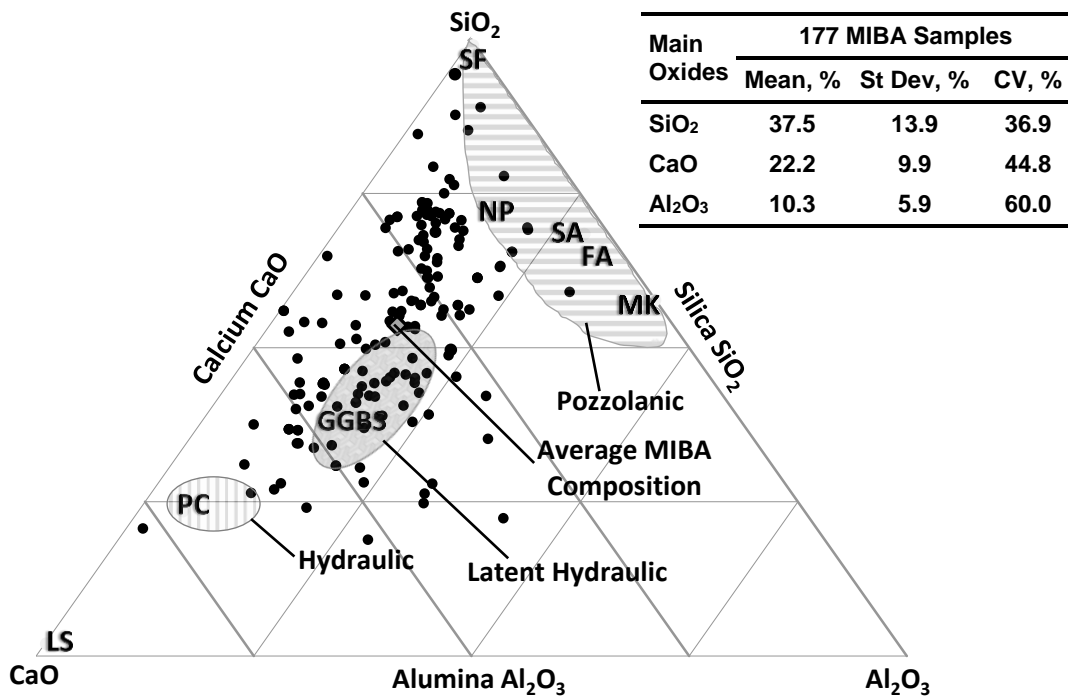
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Note: PC = Portland cement, GGBS = ground granulated blastfurnace slag, FA = fly ash, MK = metakaolin, SA = shale ash, NP = natural pozzolan, SF = silica fume and LS = limestone.

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Figure 1: Ternary plot of the composition of the main oxides in MIBA

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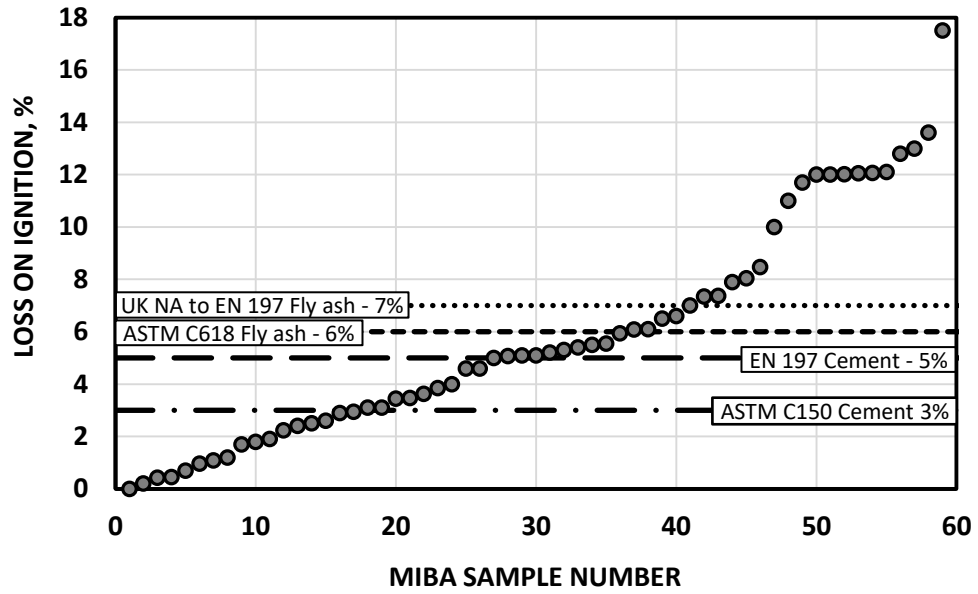


Figure 2: LOI values of MIBA samples in ascending order

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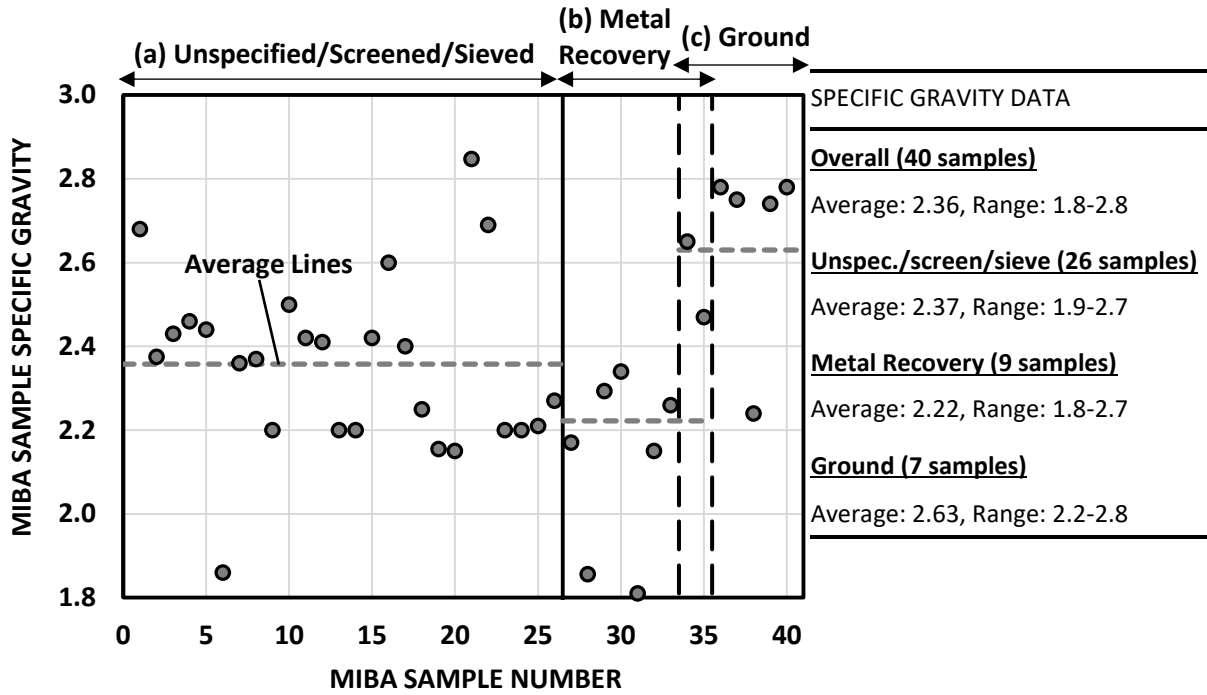
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776 Figure 3: Density results of MIBA for (a) unspecified treatment/screened/sieved samples (b) samples

777 subjected to metal recovery treatment and (c) samples ground to cement size fraction.

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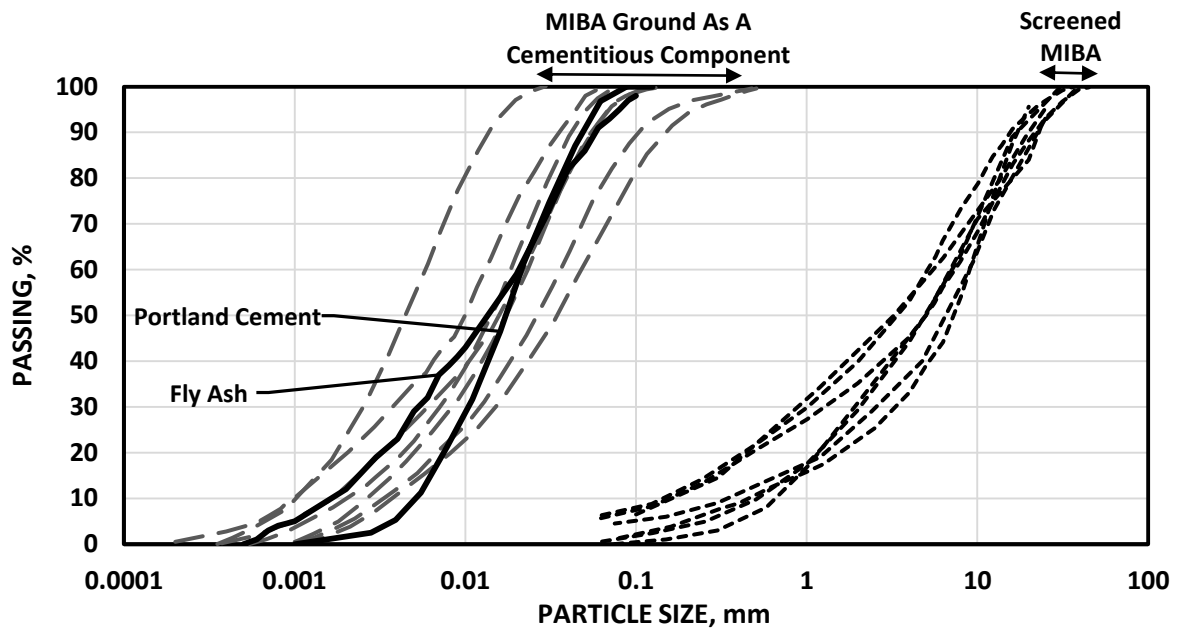
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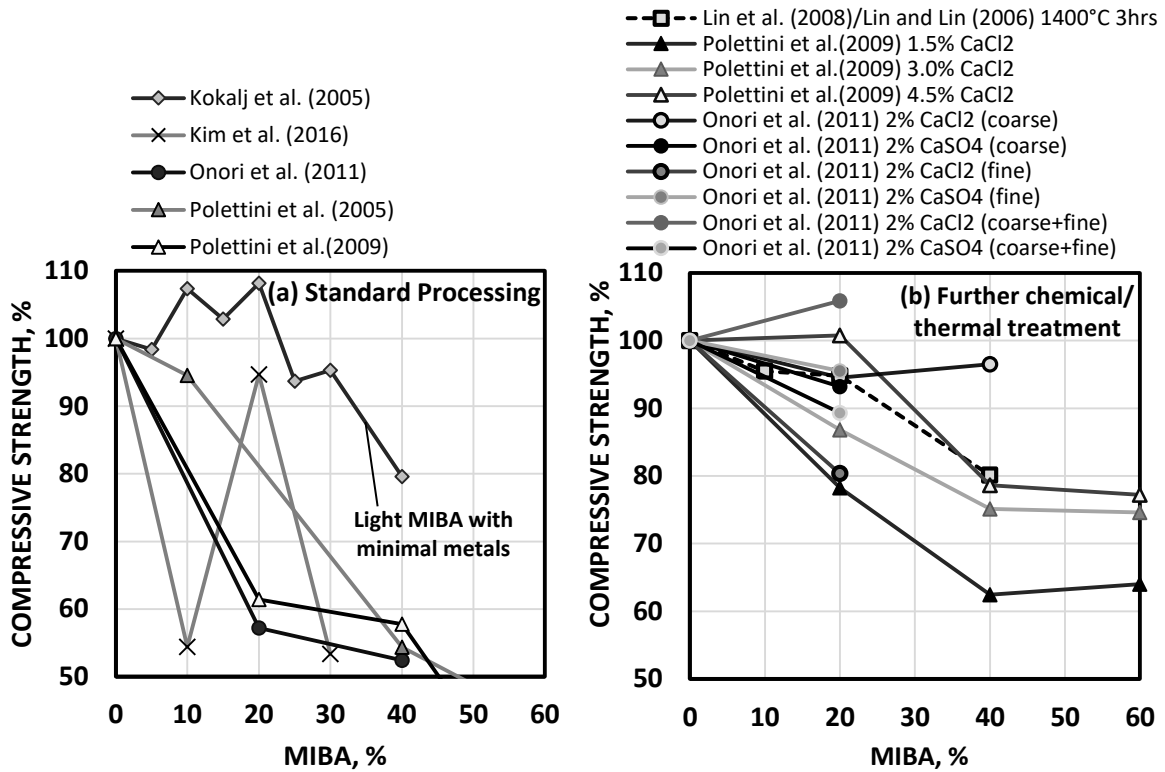
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 793 Figure 4: Particle size distribution curves of MIBA samples screened  
 794 and ground as a cementitious component  
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810 Figure 5: Effect on cement paste compressive strength with MIBA subjected to (a) standard

811 processing and (b) additional chemical or thermal treatments.

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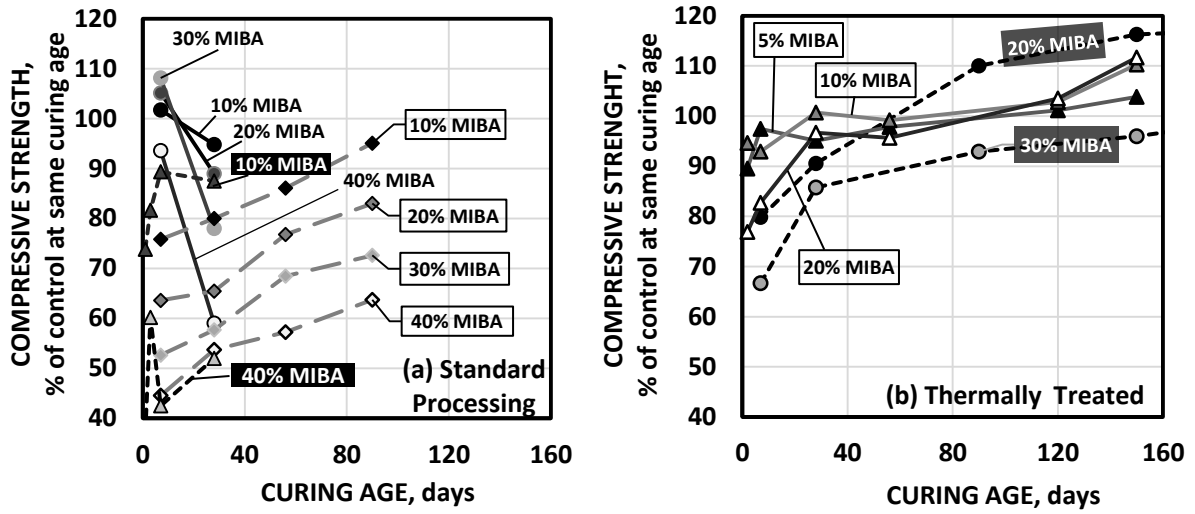
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— Zhang and Zhao (2014) 10-50% MIBA      - - - - Saccani et al. (2005), 1500°C 4 hrs (20, 30% MIBA)  
 - - - - Cheng et al. (2011)/Cheng (2012) 10-40% MIBA      — Ferraris et al. (2009), 1450°C 12 hrs (5, 10, 20% MIBA)  
 - - - - Whittaker et al. (2009) 10, 40% MIBA



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Figure 6: Compressive strength development of mortars using MIBA subjected to (a) standard

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processing and (b) additional thermal treatment.

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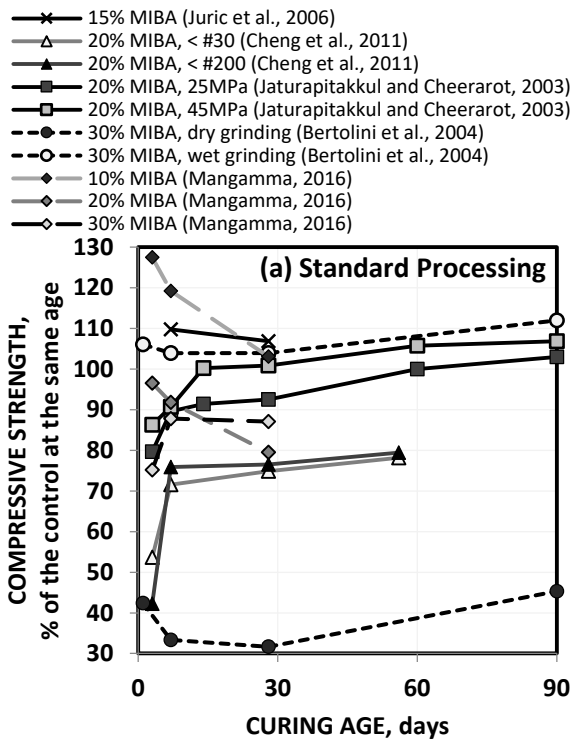
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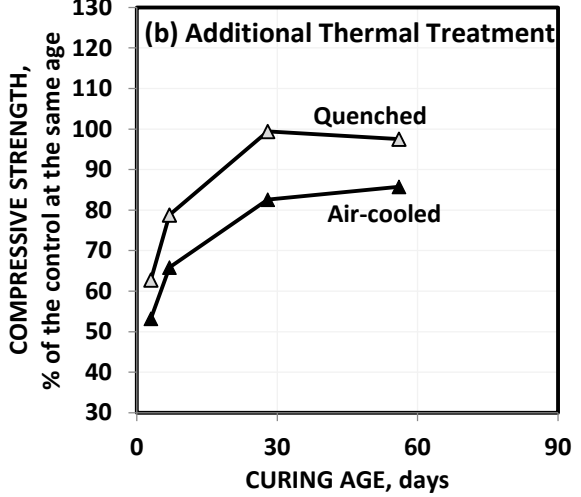
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Notes:  
**Cheng et al. (2011)** used MIBA ground to two size fractions (< #30 and < #200 sieves).  
**Jaturapitakkul and Cheerarot (2003)** produced concrete mixes with target strengths from 25-45 MPa.  
**Bertolini et al. (2004)** subjected MIBA to a dry or wet grinding treatment.

—▲— 20% MIBA, 1450°C, Quenched, < #200 (Cheng et al., 2011)  
 —▲— 20% MIBA, 1450°C, Air-cooled, < #200 (Cheng et al., 2011)



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Figure 7: Compressive strength development of concrete using MIBA subjected to (a) standard processing and (b) additional thermal treatment.

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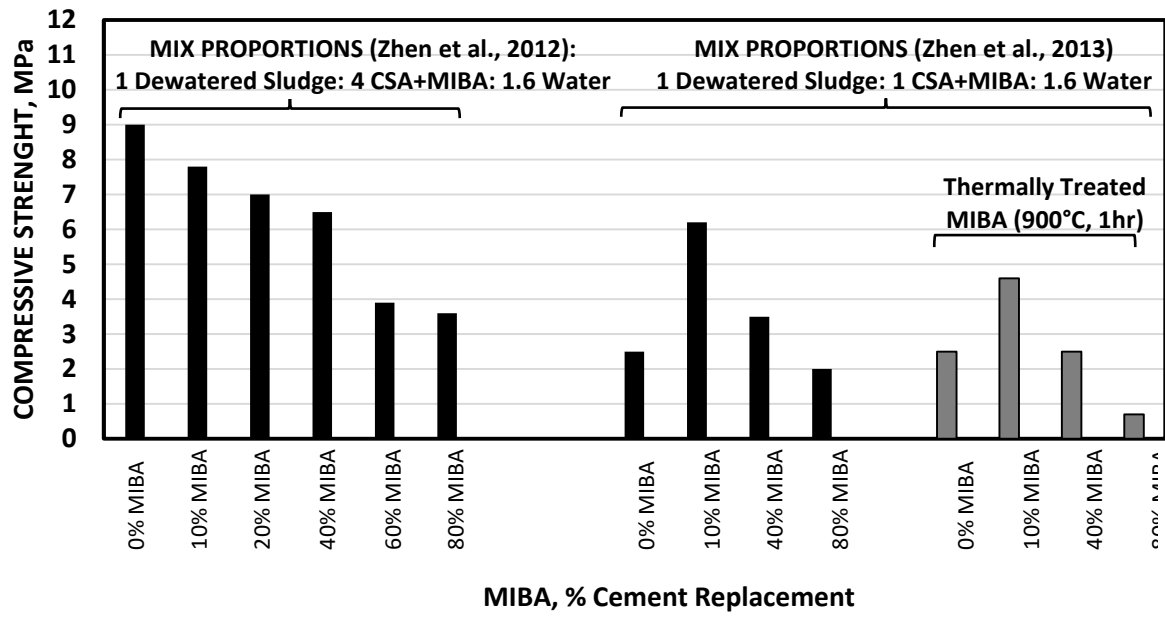
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Figure 8: Compressive strength of CLSM after 28 days using MIBA as a cement (CSA) replacement

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