

Interview with Dr Laurent Izoret

Dr Laurent Izoret has been a RILEM member since 2001, being part, amongst others, of the technical committees (TCs): [251-SRT Sulfate resistance testing](#), [259-ISR Prognosis of deterioration and loss of serviceability in structures affected by alkali-silica reactions](#) and [298-EBD Test methods to evaluate durability of blended cement pastes against deleterious ions](#). He is currently the Deputy Chair of RILEM TC [312-PHC Performance testing of hydraulic cements](#). Between 2015 and 2023, Dr Izoret was Chairman of the European Committee for Standardization CEN/TC51 “Cement and building limes”. He is currently the President of *Réseau Réciproque Conseil*, a consulting firm in R&D and engineering of low-carbon materials, and normative strategy for the construction sector. He also holds a position of researcher at Sorbonne University, Paris, France. In this RILEM interview, Dr Izoret presents his personal view about the role of RILEM documents in the standardization process of new materials and techniques of the construction industry.

10 October 2025



Daniela Ciano, RILEM Implementation Manager (RIM): Dr Izoret, thank you for giving us this interview – we look forward to hearing your views on RILEM’s impact on research and construction worldwide. Let’s start with a simple question - Why is RILEM beneficial for the industry sector?

Dr Laurent Izoret (Laurent): In my opinion, RILEM is valuable to the industry because it is an independent scientific entity, producing high-quality research through its various technical committees. Most significantly for industry, RILEM documents can serve as pre-standardisation recommendations or standard operating procedures. This is especially important, as industry often focuses on procedures and standards; the ability to develop and pilot standards on an experimental basis is highly advantageous. In my view, this is the principal reason why the construction industry stands to benefit from engaging with RILEM.

During my previous role at ATILH (Technical Association of the French Hydraulic Binder Industry), I was heavily involved with CEN (European Committee for Standardization), participating in several technical committees and working groups. While some colleagues considered RILEM meetings and round-robin tests an additional burden on their schedule, I consistently maintained that, although these activities can be challenging, it is essential to participate in certain matters as this phase forms the foundation for pre-standardisation and provides the scientific basis for our work. That was my stance during my tenure in the French cement industry. Now, as the head of my own consulting firm, I continue to hold this view. My involvement in RILEM allows me to remain engaged with key issues and to contribute actively. Furthermore, I am able to access leading-edge studies that are directly relevant to my field of expertise.

Consider the case of LC³-50 cement! While at ATILH, I discovered that this cement could not be standardised and certified due to a compositional issue. Fortunately, I was invited by Karen (*Editor’s note: Karen Scrivener, EPFL, Chair of RILEM TC 312-PHC Performance testing of hydraulic cements*) to give a presentation, and it was through preparing for this that I identified the issue. After a close coordination with Karen, she defined the way to adapt the proportions of constituents, which led to a

full range of compositions of LC³ cements corresponding to the standardized composition fields and avoiding this issue of composition limits. This experience reinforced my belief that a closer relationship between industry and RILEM could help to avoid such impasses in the future.

RIM: Could the pace of work in a RILEM technical committee be considered problematic compared to the typically faster pace in industry?

Laurent: I would argue that this is merely a perception. Even in industry, certain issues have persisted for more than a decade. For example, the most recent matter addressed by CEN/TC 51, concerning sulphate-resisting cement and associated protocols, has been under discussion for decades, yet a satisfactory compromise or procedure remains elusive. It is essential to approach such work with a long-term perspective. If a procedure proves ineffective or encounters failures, it may require a decade to resolve—longer than the typical lifespan of a RILEM technical committee. Engaging with RILEM from the outset establishes the scientific foundation for the topic at hand, which ultimately saves time.

RIM: What do you value most about your involvement with RILEM?

Laurent: I greatly appreciate the international character of RILEM and the diversity of the institutions involved. This diversity is a true asset. It is always enlightening to understand the reasons behind the results obtained by RILEM members in round-robin tests. Such exchanges enable the enhancement of protocols in their final versions. Currently, I am experiencing this first-hand in a round-robin test on the determination of mechanical strength in cement, as proposed by RILEM TC 312-PHC. Initially, I was apprehensive about the variety of results obtained, but upon deeper analysis, it has been highly informative to comprehend the underlying reasons, allowing us to refine the protocol and arrive at an effective solution.

Even when different laboratories are working with similar materials, such as cement, they do not always interpret standards in the same way, and procedures may vary according to individual approaches. These differences can lead to divergent outcomes. However, if we look beyond appearances and thoroughly analyse the reasons for any unusual results, it becomes a source of significant enrichment for me.

RIM: What do you most appreciate in RILEM?

Laurent: The greatest strength of RILEM lies in its status as an independent institution dedicated to research and to the practical application of research in testing protocols. Independence is crucial; should industry influence research, the integrity of the work would be compromised. RILEM remains independent, ensuring that the most advanced laboratory testing technologies are available to all. The relationship between RILEM and industry—particularly the exchange of information—is vital. Occasionally, laboratories may pursue a particular direction; if industry remains uninformed, it may proceed in a manner not aligned with best practice. Thus, information sharing is essential to establish a common pathway and to ensure all parties are well informed. This collaborative approach is exemplified by ongoing exchanges between TC 312-PHC and the Global Cement and Concrete Association (GCCA) representing European industry, where regular communication and information sharing are maintained.

RIM: Dr. Izoret, thank you very much for this informative interview and your long-standing contributions to RILEM.